



American Voices: The Varied Carols We Sing

Curriculum Unit 07.01.09
by Susan LaForest

Rationale

Imagine a fourth grade student listening to his teacher reading lines from Walt Whitman's poem "I, Too Hear America Singing":

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he
makes ready for work, or leaves off work,. . .

(Levin, 1997, p. 9).

Then the teacher asks, "What do you think the poet means when he uses the words varied carols?" Suddenly the student feels nervous and frightened when he realizes that he is unable to answer the question because he doesn't understand the meaning of the poem or even the meanings of most of the words in the poem.

This is a scene that could face English language learners not just in the New Haven Public Schools, but in schools across the country. Linguistically and culturally diverse students are the fastest growing student population in New Haven like other cities and suburban areas in the United States. English language learners (ELL) face the unique challenge of having to learn the same core curriculum concepts as their native speaking classmates while at the same time master the task of acquiring sufficient language proficiency to succeed academically in school.

The case of *Lau v Nichols* (414, U.S., 563-572, 1974) ensured that like all mainstream English speaking students, English language learners have the same legal rights to appropriate educational opportunities that meet their academic needs so that they will succeed in school. In this case the Supreme Court (1974) concluded that "because students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education," all states are now mandated to provide educational programs that meet academic needs of English language learners.

New Haven Public Schools is committed to providing all students the opportunity to achieve academically. This fact, coupled with federal legislation of "No Child Left Behind" that demands that all children will succeed and meet content standards, has made an urgent need for educators to continually seek and refine innovative

strategies to help English language learners meet academic success.

Teaching about diversity is important at all levels and to all students, but even more so to students who arrive in this country with a limited knowledge of the characteristics of our multicultural society. All Americans are not the same, and educators must promote this understanding for all their students. Educators must also send the message to their students that they not only accept diversity, but they personally value and embrace it. With this understanding, students can honor their own ethnic heritage as they become valued members of our ever increasing pluralistic society. Along with providing opportunities for students to engage in stimulating and motivational learning activities, teachers must have high expectations for the academic achievement of all learners.

Therefore, I have developed this unit for my fourth grade students to listen to the voices of various American writers that represent this cultural diversity in the United States. Prior to beginning this unit I would recommend that the teacher first have a clear understanding of voice in writing. To facilitate this understanding, I would recommend Elbow's (1996) book, *Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing*. I found his essay on voice extremely helpful in promoting my personal understanding of the various facets of voice. He clarifies the distinctions of voice as: "the human voice, the dramatic voice, the recognizable voice, the voice of authority, and the resonant voice" (p. xx). In particular, what I found most helpful was his explanation of "resonant voice" or "presence" in writing, that is, when an author of a work shares his conscious and unconscious beliefs through his words (pp. xxiv- xxxix).

It is my objective that this unit of study will not only broaden my own students' understanding of the differences that exist in Americans in our society, but enhance their understanding of the differences and similarities among different people and groups. At the same time, I wish to develop my students' second language acquisition skills in the context of this literature study. Although I wrote this unit to use with English language learners who are bilingual students in my fourth grade bilingual class, the content of this unit may be adapted to teach English language learners at other grade levels as well as for use with mainstream students. Therefore, this unit will contribute not only to student knowledge, but to teacher knowledge as well.

The teaching strategies employed in this unit are based on research in second language acquisition and effective methodology for teaching content to English language learners. Sheltered content teaching has proven a successful teaching methodology to address the instructional needs of these students. The term "Sheltered English" refers to a teaching methodology that utilizes strategies to make the English language comprehensible to English language learners while these students are simultaneously learning core content area skills. Sheltered instruction is based on a second language acquisition theory of "comprehensible input" and the work of Stephen Krashen, who maintains the necessity to introduce new language in a context that is meaningful to students and one where second language learners will be able to practice their developing language skills in authentic situations.

Echevarria and Short (2003) furthered this theoretical understanding with the development of a model of the Sheltered English methodology called Sheltered English Operation Protocol (SIOP). This model of Sheltered English utilizes specific strategies such as: lesson preparation that includes both language and content objectives; provides an opportunity to develop the necessary background knowledge; scaffolds instruction (provides enough support to students to ensure their mastery of the content objective); uses teacher modeling; adapts content skills to students' language proficiency level; emphasizes key vocabulary (essential vocabulary that must be learned in order to master the content skills); and utilizes speech patterns that are appropriate for the language proficiency levels of students (the use of simple grammatical structures and

vocabulary that students are able comprehend), and uses supplementary materials such as visuals, maps and graphic organizers (Echevarria & Short, 2003).

Objectives

I intend to teach this unit during a four or five week period of study in the fall as an introduction to a year-long theme of American diversity.

The first objective is for my students to learn about the cultural diversity in this country through a study of the people who represent diverse Americans and geographical regions of the United States such as the North, the South, and the West. My students will study these regions in more detail during the remainder of the year and gain an understanding of the diverse voices that are present in American literature. Students will acquire these skills as they read, listen, and discuss different genres of writing including poetry, fiction, non-fiction, folktales, children's picture books, biographies, and speeches from distinct Americans.

The second objective is for my students to increase their second language acquisition skills as they engage in cooperative and student-centered activities. They will enhance their English language skills including fluency, vocabulary development, and grammatical competence.

The third objective is for students to gain an understanding of the academic language used in a literature study. Students will master this third goal of understanding different literary genres such as: realistic fiction, speeches, biographies, and poetry and through an analysis of the author's craft. Students will learn various literary devices that writers use such as: rhyme, metaphors, similes, repetition, and imagery. Students will also respond orally and in writing to the readings as they identify the theme and the author's purpose for writing. Students will learn to respond to written works by making personal connections, using higher order thinking skills, and making text-to-text comparisons. These are specific literacy skills that fourth grade students must master in order to succeed on the Connecticut Mastery Test. This unit will also provide students opportunities to write and explore their own voices in their writing.

Students will also make personal connections between the readings and their own immigrant experiences. They will also connect their learning in this unit to other areas of the curriculum. For example, students will read and draw maps, make and interpret timelines, and illustrate their own writings. Throughout the unit students will have the opportunity to interact with their classmates, work independently, and share their work that result from their learning experiences. Students will study the works of: Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, as well as the speeches of Susan B. Anthony, Martin Luther King, Native-American writers and biographies of famous Americans such as Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, and Jackie Robinson.

Throughout the unit of study, students will engage in learning activities that are directly connected to district curriculum and state standards regarding expected learning outcomes in language arts. Also, these learning outcomes are aligned with the skills tested on the Connecticut Mastery Examination. Students will have an opportunity to use higher order thinking skills as they participate in the learning tasks.

Students will converse their classmates as they are involved in lessons that promote self-understanding, self-esteem, and provide opportunities to utilize their emerging oral and written language and content skills. My students will engage in all areas of language development (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) as they

read stories, poems and speeches; listen to storytellers; sing songs; and even dramatize pieces of writing. They will also write their responses to the readings in a daily journal and share their writings with classmates.

Students will also use graphic organizers to organize information prior, during, and after reading activities. I will help students build background, and tap into my students' prior knowledge in order to bridge their former learning with the new concepts and experiences. Some of the graphic organizers that I will use with my students include: Venn Diagrams, a Comparison Matrix, a Timeline, a KWL chart that include sections: what I know, what I want to know, and what I learned.

Strategies

Introduction

Students will begin the unit by learning that America is a country made up of immigrants from many cultures, and America is a nation that embraces and welcomes diversity. To exemplify the cultural diversity in America, students will read the words "I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear," from the poet Walt Whitman's "I Hear America Singing." They will learn career vocabulary used in this poem such as: boatman, shoemaker, and wood-cutter. They will discuss the diverse groups of Americans that this poem represents. As they begin to grasp the concept of American diversity, they will also read the "The New Colossus," a poem by Emma Lazarus. This is the poem inscribed on the Statue of Liberty that welcomes all immigrants to this country. They will learn the meaning of the words in the following lines: "Give me your tired, your poor/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free/The wretched refuse of your teeming shore/ send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me/ I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Students will lower their 'affective filter' (language learning anxiety) by making personal responses as they share their own immigrant experiences with each other. I have underlined some of the Sheltered English strategies that I have used in this unit.

The students will then read the lyrics and sing the song "This Land is Your Land" by Woody Guthrie. My students will show their understanding of the vocabulary in this song by illustrating phrases such as "the redwood forest" and "the New York island" and locating these places on a map.

Part I --The North

Students will learn about the rural life and culture of the North and the area of New England. They will listen and read Frost's "Stopping By the Woods on a Snowy Evening" in Paschen's collection of children poems, *Poetry Speaks to Children*. This book also contains a CD with Frost, himself reciting this poem. This poem contains excellent examples of rhyme. We will excerpts from his collection of poems, *North of Boston*. We will also read "The Road Not Taken" and excerpts from the poem, "Birches." My students will learn that Frost writes about the simple everyday occurrences of his life. They will learn biographical information about Robert Frost who was born in 1874 and died in 1963. He was one of America's leading poets of the twentieth century and was a four-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize. They will discuss what words Frost uses to show his appreciation of nature. Students will identify the poet's use of rhyme, repetition, and metaphors in his poems.

In this section of the unit, students will also read several poems of Walt Whitman who began publishing his poems during the mid-1800's. While he lived in New Orleans for a short time, he witnessed a slave auction that created a lifelong disdain for the inhumanity of slavery. Because of his opposition to slavery, he

supported Abraham Lincoln's abolition of slavery. Students will then read Whitman's "Oh Captain, My Captain!" that honors Lincoln after his death. Students will learn who the "Captain" is that Whitman is referring to in his poem and learn about metaphors.

My students will also read about Lincoln's life and his speech, "Gettysburg Address." My students will also read a picture book biography, *Honest Abe*, and respond by working with a partner to make a timeline of Lincoln's life (See Lesson Plan # 1). Students will then use this timeline as a pre-writing organizer to write a short biography of Lincoln's life. They will then illustrate one section of their biography of Lincoln, share them orally with their classmates, and display their work in the classroom. Students will then read excerpts from Lincoln's life including that he ran for office, and was defeated several times, but did not give up. They will respond to this reading by making a personal connection about a time that they had a problem and how they solved it.

Students will then read "Nancy Hanks" by Rosemary Carr and Stephen Vincent Benet. This poem is about an imaginary conversation that the mother of Lincoln might have had with a passerby about him. My students will learn vocabulary for feeling words and share their own feelings as they read and discuss this poem.

Next, my students will read selected poems of the prolific African American poet, Langston Hughes who is considered a Harlem Renaissance poet. They will learn that Hughes, who was born in 1902 and died in 1967, was one of America's greatest poets. He wrote about the difficulties, triumphs, and events in the everyday lives of African-Americans. They will learn details about the life of Hughes. My students will discuss the concept that people have their own individual differences but still are a part of a common humanity as they read excerpts from Hughes' poem, "Telephone Book" from Rampersad's *Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*:

We're all in the telephone book,

Folks from everywhere on earth--

Anderson to Zabowski

It's a record of America's worth. (Rampersad, 1995, 603).

My students will then read a short biography of Jackie Robinson (1919-1972). Although Jackie Robinson was born in Georgia in 1919, he won his struggle as the first African American to play major league baseball in 1947. This was a time when African Americans traditionally played on racially segregated baseball teams. He succeeded in his struggle and was the first African American to play major league baseball for the Brooklyn Dodgers in New York. Students will respond to this reading by imagining that they are writing a letter to Jackie Robinson informing him of the of the very different experiences that African American baseball players now have as they play professional baseball on racially integrated baseball teams. Students will learn the proper style to use when writing a friendly letter and be able to identify parts of a friendly letter including the return address, salutation, body and closing. (See Lesson Plan # 2).

Students will also read about American women's struggle for voting rights and excerpts from in Susan B. Anthony's 1873 speech, "Are Women Persons?" as she speaks of her hope for the day when all American citizens shall be equal and share the rights to vote. Students will look at visual images of life and how people dressed in the 1800's in the United States. They will look at pictures of clothing, and discuss social norms and proper behavior of that time period. As students brainstorm and discuss women's struggles for freedom, students will work in groups of three to complete a Venn Diagram that will compare women's roles in the past and present. Hillary Clinton will serve as a role model for students to understand that women today are equal

to their male peers. They will read excerpts from Clinton's life in Guernsey's biographical book, *Hillary Rodham Clinton*. They will first organize their writing with a graphic organizer using a Venn Diagram. Students will continue to work together to use this writing organizer as a pre-writing exercise to write paragraphs of comparison and contrast). Each group will have the opportunity to present their writings orally to other groups in the class.

Part 2--The South

In this section of the unit, students will look at voices of the American South. Then they will read "The Runaway Slave" that exemplifies people helping runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad. Students hear the voice of a runaway slave, Harriet Tubman, as they read excerpts from her biography, her experiences on the Underground Railroad as she helped other slaves reach the North and their own freedom. Students will respond to this reading by making a map to show the route that runaway slaves might have taken as they traveled to the North to their freedom on the Underground Railroad with Harriet Tubman. Then my students will write their personal reactions to slavery after they view pictures of a slave auction and discuss them.

To activate prior knowledge, prior to reading King's speech, "I Have a Dream", I will ask what the students know about the life of Martin Luther King. Then I will show pictures of King and discuss aspects of his life. Students will learn about segregation, prejudice, and equal rights. Students will next watch and listen to a video of King before they read excerpts from the speech. They will then compare the rights of African Americans in the time of Tubman, King, and the present day using a Comparison Matrix. Students will list Tubman, King, and today the top of a paper, and along the left side of the paper they will include category boxes such as: rights, homes, school, and jobs while creating the matrix. They will later use the information in this graphic organizer as a pre-writing organizer before writing complete sentences.

Part 3--The West

In this section of the unit, students will hear the voices of the Americans from the West. My students will read excerpts from Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and learn about life on the Mississippi River. Then students will then read a short poem by Hamlin Garland, "On the Mississippi." They will compare these two literary works by first using a Venn Diagram, and then they will write sentences based on the information in the graphic organizer.

Students will also read the first few chapters from the children's book *Traveled West in a Covered Wagon* by Ellen Levine that weaves a tale of overcoming hardships on the Oregon Trail. Students will also illustrate their understanding about daily life in a covered wagon by drawing a picture and writing a caption for the picture. They will also draw a diagram and label parts of a covered wagon, and then share their drawings with classmates. Students will use oral language skills to discuss their diagram with classmates. After reading this children's book, students will write a personal response by drawing a covered wagon and writing some of the items that the pioneers might bring with them on such a trip. They will then use these words in sentences to explain why they chose specific items. For example, "Pioneers might bring a shovel and hoe that they need to work on their new farms or they might bring a gun to hunt animals for food and for protection."

Students will then experience the voice of Native Americans by reading Bruchac's folktale, *Pushing Up the Sky*. They will develop an understanding of the importance of nature for these people and how much they value it. Students will then use a T-Chart graphic organizer to identify aspects of the story that could be real and those that are fantasy. They will discuss the moral of the story that we succeed when we work together and help each other.

My students will then read the short speech of the Native American Chief Joseph, of the Nez Perce Tribe, "I Will Fight No More Forever." They will list and discuss reasons why they think Chief Joseph has chosen to stop fighting. They will write a response to this piece by telling why they agree or disagree with Chief Joseph's decision. Students will also draw maps of the West identifying the Santa Fe Trail and locations of various Native American groups including the Cherokee and Nez Perce tribes. My students will study Native American tribes and their different ways of life including their homes, food, and clothing in a unit on Native Americans later in the year.

Next my students will read Latino author Gary Soto's poem, "Letter to a Father Working in Tulare, California," that describes the difficult life of a migrant farm worker in California. Students will also read a speech by Cesar Chavez, "God Help Us to Be Men!" who was an outspoken critic of the conditions of Mexican-Americans working as migrant farm laborers, and their struggles. Working in small groups, students will make a list of some of the hardships that migrant workers experience on migrant farms.

Students will respond to their reading throughout the unit through various activities that will promote literacy and an understanding of diversity of voice and culture. They will use a matrix graphic organizer to review and summarize various obstacles that they encountered in their reading and how characters and people solved their problem. They will compare the obstacles of Native Americans and those of Latino Americans. (See Lesson Plan #3).

Another literacy skill that students will learn at this time will be how to distinguish between cause and effect. Students will read sentences that will provide a review of the different voices that have learned in this unit. They will separate parts of the sentences into causes and effects. They will write their answers on a graphic organizer using arrows and circles to distinguish between cause and effect. (Although there are different graphic organizers to show cause and effect, I chose this one because they will need to be able to recognize this graphic organizer and its purpose for the Connecticut Mastery Test).

They will also learn about signal words like "because" or "so" or "since" that denote either cause or effect. The following sentences are examples of sentences that I will use in this cause and effect lesson that will also help students review previously learned content in the unit. Slaves were treated badly by their masters so they ran away. Chief Joseph said, "I will fight no more" because he did not want anymore of the people in his tribe to die in battles with American soldiers. Because Martin Luther King believed that segregation was unfair to African Americans, he worked to change the law. Since migrant farmers experienced bad working conditions, Cesar Chavez worked to get unions to help them. Susan B. Anthony worked for the right for women to vote since she believed that women were equal to men.

Conclusion

Students will engage in written responses to their readings and gain new skills such as journal and letter writing. They will use their imaginations and choose one writer and write a poem or piece of prose that will represent one of the diverse voices that they have studied in the unit. They will use critical thinking skills to build their understanding and interpret the works they have studied in the unit. Students will also enhance their listening skills and writing skills by engaging in such strategies as visualization and making predictions. They will actively listen to readings, stories and speeches. They will practice note-taking skills and use these to engage in reflection and summary writing. They will also keep daily journals to advance their understanding of themes and vocabulary. Throughout the unit students will be encouraged to think about similarities and differences in various works that they have read.

As a culminating activity, students will celebrate their learning with an Author's Tea. They will use their oral language skills as they make oral presentation to share their own writing projects generated in this unit that illustrates one section of the American cultural diversity that they have studied. They will use good listening skills as they become part of the audience for their classmates. During this activity students will be encouraged to dress up in costume as they dramatize a character or author that they have read about in the unit. Students will invite family members to become audience members in this activity. This will serve to facilitate parental involvement and allow students to gain a greater sense of pride in their own learning and academic accomplishments.

This unit will reinforce themes such as: American diversity, overcoming obstacles, and the appreciation of the beauty of nature around them. This unit will foster my students' the understanding that it is through hard work and determination that people meet with success and the realization of their dreams. This unit will encourage English language learners to continue to work hard to overcome obstacles in their own lives and as they strive to meet academic success in their own education. This unit will also provide an initial understanding of various voices found in literature, provide students with an exposure to different genres of literature and cultural differences of people in the United States. Finally, will my students will learn that we must value both the difference and universality of all people.

Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan # 1 Understanding the Voices of Northerners; Creating a Timeline; Identifying Metaphors

Each lesson that follows has specific language strategies underlined that would help promote understanding the English language learners.

I would begin the lesson by asking the following questions:

How did the Northerners feel about slavery?

What words tell the reader how the people from the North felt about slavery?

Why did they feel this way?

What were some obstacles that Lincoln overcame?

How do you feel about slavery?

Why?

Who is the "Captain" in this poem?

Why do you think the poet uses the word, "Captain?"

Content Objective : Students will develop an understanding of the attitudes of northerners toward slavery; learn important events in Lincoln's life and his view about slavery and the changing rights of African

Americans. They will develop an understanding of the metaphors in the poem, "O Captain! My Captain!" such a "father," "ship" and "Captain".

Language Objective : Students will learn how to make a timeline to sequence events chronological events, recognize a metaphor

Key Vocabulary : voice, metaphor, keel, deck, mournful, tread, rack, dead, wreath, bouquets, swaying, mass, bugle, trills

Materials : Timeline outlines, chart paper, colored index cards, markers, copies of Whitman's poem "O Captain! My Captain!," pictures of Lincoln, diagram of a boat with labels for parts of the boat including deck, anchor, and keel.

Part 1. Making a Timeline of Lincoln's Life

Modeling/Building Background : Concepts will be linked to past experiences and past learning by asking students to name famous people that they know about from their own country and in the United States.

Students will look at pictures of Lincoln. In order to build background information, students will read a biography of Lincoln's life using the picture book, *Honest Abe* . Students will discuss how the North and the South felt regarding the issue of slavery. I would also show them an example of timeline depicting the major experiences of George Washington's life.

Lesson Delivery : The teacher will use slowed and simplified speech to adjust to students' English language proficiency level. The teacher will model strategies and explain new concepts. The teacher will provide students with opportunities to use the strategies.

Students will list important events in Lincoln's Life. Working as a class activity, students will make a timeline together of the events in Lincoln's life. The teacher will use students' input to make a large timeline on chart paper for all students to see. The teacher will use various questioning techniques to illicit understanding and provide students the opportunity to use higher order thinking skills. Examples of questions: Where did Lincoln live? How did Lincoln show his view on slavery? Why do you think the Southerners disagreed with him? How did Lincoln die? Why do you think someone would want to kill him?

Interaction

Partner Work: Using a timeline outline, students will extend this understanding by working together to make a timeline of the school year.

Individual Practice : Using information from their excerpt on Lincoln, students will make a timeline of Abraham Lincoln's life. Students will use this timeline as a prewriting organizer to write a short summary called, "Abraham Lincoln's Life."

Review/Assessment : The students will respond to questions about the correct form of writing a timeline such as putting the events on one side of the timeline and the dates on the other. Students review what a correct model of a timeline. Finally, using this same timeline outline that students used earlier in the lesson, the teacher will ask students to develop a timeline of their own writing about events in their own life and assess their work. In a future lesson students will use this timeline as a prewriting organizer to write a short autobiographical essay of their own life. In this way students will have an opportunity to make a personal

connection.

Part 2. Identifying Metaphors

Modeling: Prior to teaching this section, I will clarify the purpose of learning. Students must learn about the author's crafts including the use of metaphors. Students will then listen to the definition of a metaphor, (a comparison made indirectly; one thing is discussed in terms of another thing) and examples of a metaphor such as: to see red, birds of a feather flock together, she is a chip off the old block, they are snowed under at work, the plan has the green light, as the teacher reads them off index cards. I will then ask students to determine the meaning of the metaphor. Students should be encouraged to give explanations, use gestures, as well as use synonyms (voyage/trip, answer/reply; grim/horrible/awful; pale/colorless) and antonyms (lie/stand, cold/hot, win/lose, dead/alive) for the vocabulary items in the poem.

Key Vocabulary : beneath, bugle, chip, crowd, dead, flock fearful, lie, object, pale, rack, ship, shore, steady, trills, vessel, victor, voyage

Materials: index cards, markers, chart paper

Guided Practice : First, the teacher will tell the class that they will read a poem about a captain on a ship. The teacher will use a diagram to show various parts of a ship including, ship, vessel, deck, keel, mast, and anchor. The teacher will introduce key vocabulary in the poem, rack, exulting, bouquets, ribbons, dead, etc. I would use pictures to depict vocabulary such as beneath, flock, shore and dead. I would allow students to listen to a bugle trill on a recording to enhance understanding.

Then students will read Whitman's poem, "O Captain! My Captain!" and then again with the students. Next, the teacher will read examples of metaphors on index cards. Then, the teacher will flip the card over to share the meaning of the metaphor with the students so they can determine if they had the correct answer. I would play a guessing game using these cards to review the vocabulary. Holding up a picture of the bugle, I would ask questions like: "What is this? What sound does it make?"

Interaction:

Small Group Work: The teacher will pass out three index cards to a group of three students and ask them to work in a group to make three metaphors and write the meaning of each metaphor on the back of the card. Students would explain their metaphors to other members of their group.

Whole Group Work : Students will show their pictures of the metaphors that they illustrated and ask members of other groups to try to guess their meanings; then they will share their responses with the rest of the class.

Individual Practice: Students will then work to identify metaphors in the poem "O Captain! My Captain!" Students will share their responses and the teacher will listen to responses and share the correct metaphors in the poem. Sample questions: How do you know that Whitman respected Lincoln? What metaphors does Whitman use in this poem? (The Captain is the Lincoln. The ship is the country.) What do the metaphors mean?

Review/Assessment: Each student will work to write two metaphors and illustrate them. Students will then share these metaphors with each other. Students will then write a list of obstacles that Lincoln overcame in his life. They will make a personal connection by writing about a personal obstacle that they themselves or a family member have overcome. They will discuss the obstacles in Lincoln's life that they have written as well

as an obstacle from their own lives. Then they will share these with classmates.

Lesson Plan # 2 The Voices of African American : Langston Hughes and Jackie Robinson; Writing a Friendly Letter

Content Objective: Students will learn to identify voice of African Americans and their struggles for equal rights. Students will read a selection of poems from Langston Hughes, including "I, Too, Sing America," "Dreams Deferred," and excerpts from "Let America Be America Again." They will also read a short biography of Jackie Robinson.

Language Objective : Students will be able to identify parts of a friendly letter (greeting, body, closing, signature) and be able to write a friendly letter using the correct letter format.

Key Vocabulary : Civil Rights, dreams, deferred, segregation, and prejudice

Materials: Copies of the poems Langston Hughes and excerpts from the Jackie Robinson story, copies of blank T-Chart forms, copies of friendly letter blank form, chart paper, pictures of Langston Hughes and Jackie Robinson.

I would provide the following scaffolds for beginning language proficiency students: I would provide a matching activity, where students would match the new vocabulary item with the meaning, while other students would copy or write the definitions themselves, depending on their language proficiency.

For less proficient students, I would offer sentence starters to help writing the letter. For example, Things have really changed these days such as: ___, I want to tell you some things about playing professional baseball today ___. You won't believe the many changes in baseball today. Some of them are ___.

Part I.

Lesson Delivery

The teacher will keep in mind appropriate pacing of the lesson, making sure that students transition smoothly from one activity to another. The teacher will also include adequate wait time after asking questions to allow for students to process the answer and process the language to produce the correct answer.

Modeling: The teacher will show pictures of Langston Hughes and Jackie Robinson. The teacher will discuss about African Americans and their contributions to the United States. The teacher will then write the key vocabulary and definitions on the blackboard and read them. The teacher will show visuals of the vocabulary to ensure student comprehension and check for understanding. The teacher will then read the poems aloud and excerpts from the selection on the biography of Jackie Robinson.

Guided Practice : The teacher and students will read three Hughes poems orally, "Dreams," The teacher will review and emphasis key vocabulary by playing a " jeopardy" game giving students the definition of the word and asking them to provide the vocabulary word for the definition. They will discuss what words speak of injustice in the poems. The teacher will play a game giving the definition of the word and ask the students to give the word. The teacher will ask questions regarding the meaning of the poems. Students will discuss the injustices and hopes that Hughes is referring to in his poems by answering guided questions from the teacher.

Students will then look at pictures of Jackie Robinson and discuss his struggle against racial prejudice. Then

students will read excerpts from his biography and discuss some of the obstacles of racial prejudice that he had to overcome as he pursued a career as a professional base ball player in the Jackie Robinson Story. The teacher will ask students to volunteer to discuss if they have ever felt that they personally experienced prejudice in their own lives.

The teacher will also share personal examples with the students. Then the teacher will ask students to think about how today's society is different than in the time of Jackie Robinson.

Interaction

Small Group Activity: Students will work in small groups to make a list using a T-Chart of improvements in African Americans' Way of Life, and things that still need to improve.

Whole Group Activity : The class will share their answers with the rest of the class. The teacher will then add student responses to a large T-Chart at the front of the room that will include the contributions the students have made.

Work With A Partner : Students will then look at an example of a friendly letter with its parts labeled, such as the return address, salutation, body, closing, and signature. Students will read another letter and work with a partner to label its parts. In this guided practice activity, students will then share their responses with the class.

Individual Practice : Students will then have an option to write a letter to Jackie Robinson or Langston Hughes telling them how life in America has improved from their time or they can imagine themselves as either Langston Hughes or Jackie Robinson and write a letter sharing their experiences of inequality and overcoming obstacles in their lifetimes. Students will then be asked to label parts of their letter.

Review Lesson Objectives: The teacher will review key vocabulary and concepts including how to use proper letter writing format in their letter and parts of a letter. The teacher will ask students to label each part of their letter after they have finished writing it. Students will have an opportunity to share their letters with each other through an oral presentation.

Assessment: The teacher will use informal assessment and offer regular feedback throughout the lesson to determine individual student understanding. The teacher will also offer individual feedback to students through individual conferencing to assess their understanding of the key concepts and vocabulary as well as their letter writing skills, and knowledge of parts of a letter at the end of the lesson. At this time the teacher will also ask students to use key vocabulary in oral sentences to assess their understanding.

Lesson Plan #3 (Two to Three Days) The Voices of Native Americans and Latino Americans; Comparing and Contrasting Information

Content Objective : Students will learn to identify the voices of Latino Americans and their struggles. They will learn about voice of Native Americans, their struggles and appreciation for nature. They will develop an understanding of their values and importance of family. Students will learn to compare and contrast information.

Language Objective : Students will learn to write a paragraph of comparison and contrast. Students will learn to use a Comparison Matrix as a prewriting organizer and to clarify their understanding of similarities and differences in these two groups of people. Students will learn key vocabulary.

Key Vocabulary : Latino words: farms, migrant, farm workers, migrant workers, picking, Native American Vocabulary: tribes, totem poles, housing, human rights

Materials : Provide students with copies of the and excerpt from the Cesar Chavez Story, copies of the excerpt from Chief Joseph's speech, "I Will Fight No More," pictures of Cesar Chavez and Chief Joseph, comparison matrix, and fact sheet form. Students will discuss migrant farming, while looking at pictures of farm workers. Include pictures of farm workers and Native Americans, a map depicting where various groups of Native Americans lived, a graphic organizer (comparison matrix), Native American realia including a doll dressed in Native American clothing and other items, and an overhead projector.

Part I. Native Americans

Activate Prior Knowledge : The teacher will ask students what they know about Native Americans. The teacher will connect to students' prior knowledge and lower the affective filter by asking them about Mayan, Aztec and Incan Indian tribes that they might have prior knowledge about. The teacher will encourage students to share their prior knowledge. Then the teacher will use this prior knowledge to connect to Native American groups that live in the United States.

Modeling : The teacher will show pictures of Native Americans and explain that there are many groups of Native Americans called tribes. The teacher will show a map that illustrates where various Native American tribes lived in the United States. The teacher will show pictures of totem poles that the Native Americans in the Northwest made.

Students will listen to the teacher read a story of Native Americans depicting their way of life including their forced exile to reservations, their struggle with White Americans, and their life on reservations today. They will look at pictures of Native Americans including Chief Joseph. The teacher will provide samples of Native American realia, including a pair of moccasins, a headdress, a doll dressed in Native American clothing. The teacher will show pictures of various Native American objects such as a totem pole and homes including the longhouse, teepee, and wigwam. Using chart paper, I will write each new vocabulary word and its definition.

Key Vocabulary : exile, reservation, long house, totem pole

Materials : paper towel rolls, scissors, glue, chart paper, markers, construction paper

Interaction

Whole Group : Students will discuss how Native Americans lived including their clothing and homes. They will look at pictures of totem poles and discuss their meaning.

Partner Work : Students will then work with a partner make totem poles out of construction paper, glue, and paper towel rolls. Then they will share their art work with the entire class. Students will leave their totem poles on display in the classroom.

Students will then read an excerpts from Chief Joseph's speech "I Will Fight No More" from McIntire's Book of Great American Speeches for Young People (104-105) and about reservation life in Relin's "Walking the White Road" in *American Roots*, (86-88). Students will discuss reasons whether or not they think Chief Joseph's decision to stop fighting was a good one or not.

Small Group : Students will work in a small group and make a list of reasons why they should continue to fight

and why they should stop fighting

Whole Group : Students will share their reasons and own opinions with their classmates.

Review/Assessment : Students will review what they have learned about Native Americans by responding to oral questions that the teacher asks. Students will then complete a fact sheet of information that they know about Native Americans. Finally, students will illustrate a fact from their fact sheet.

Part 2-- Latino Americans

Key Vocabulary : migrants, farmers, migrant workers, union, strike, hunger,

Modeling: Students will read a short story of migrant workers and the struggle of Cesar Chavez. (This story will detail aspects of the life of Chavez including: born in Yuma Arizona in 1927, died in 1993, raised in migrant worker camps, organized farm workers into the United Farm Workers Union (UFW), committed to non-violence, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994. The teacher will paraphrase the story using simple syntax. The teacher will emphasize illustrations from the story and read the picture captions to ensure understanding. Students will then discuss elements of the story together.

Interaction:

Small Group: Using a chart, students will complete the list of characteristics of the life of a farm worker working on the left and on the right will write the reason they chose this characteristic. They will work together on this task in a small group. (e.g. Characteristics: low pay, hard work, poor living conditions, difficult working conditions Reasons: because migrant workers had to work all day in the hot sun, migrant workers had to move from place to place to find new work.)

Whole Group : Each small group will share their work on the characteristics and reasons of Migrant workers with the whole class.

Review (Native Americans): Using students' prior knowledge about Native Americans, the teacher will read facts about tribes of the Plains and the Northwest. Then the teacher will give a copy of a model paragraph of comparison and contrast about Plains and Nez Perce Indians, read it together, and discuss it with the students.

Partner Work : Working with a partner, students will identify categories of similarities and differences of these two groups of Native Americans such as clothing, housing, food, and struggles, and geographic locations.

Then students will complete a Comparison Matrix together with their partner. The side categories will also include such topics as: importance of family, respect for Nature, difficulties, language and famous people .Then students will reread a paragraph of comparison and contrast about Plains and Nez Perce Indians. They will identify categories of similarities and differences of these two groups of Native Americans such as clothing, housing, food, and struggles, and geographic locations.

Review : Native Americans and Latino Americans

Students will then work with a partner to complete use a Comparison Matrix with Native Americans and Latino Americans at the top. The side categories will include such topics as: importance of family, respect for Nature, housing type, source of food, difficulties, language.

Whole Group : Students will share the responses they wrote on their graphic organizer, the comparison matrix, as the teacher writes the answers on at the same form using the overhead projector to write student responses. In this way the teacher will model the correct spelling and syntax for students to correct their responses on their own forms.

Practice/Application : Pairs of students will share their completed matrix with another pair of students. Each student pair will revise his matrix as necessary.

Assessment : The teacher will explain that a paragraph that tells how two things are alike is called a paragraph of comparison while a paragraph that explains how two things are different is called a paragraph of contrast. The teacher will model an example of each paragraph by reading examples of each kind of paragraph. Each student will use his completed Comparison Matrix as a pre-writing organizer to write two paragraphs of comparison and contrast of Native Americans and Latino Americans.

Annotated Bibliography

Student Resources

Aller, S. B. (2004). *Sitting Bull* . NY: Barnes & Noble Publishing.

Anthony, S. B. (2003). "Are women persons?" In S. McIntire's *Book of great American speeches for young people*. NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

This book contains many speeches of diverse Americans that would appeal to young students.

Bruchac, J. (1994). Little hare and the pine tree. In D. Holt & B. Mooney's (Eds.). *Ready-to-tell tales* (pp. 125- 128). Little Rock, AK: August House, Inc.

This is a multicultural resource that contains stories and tales from many cultures.

Bruchac, J. (2004). Pushing up the sky. In A. Schifini, D. Short's et al. (Eds.). *Avenues Book D* (pp. 38-48). Carmel, CA: Hampton-Brown Publishing.

This anthology of children's literature is part of a series. It is an excellent resource for teaching literacy skills.

Carr, R. & Benet, S. V. (1993). Nancy Hanks. In Cohn's *From sea to shining sea: A treasury of American folklore and folktales* . NY: Scholastic, Inc.

This poem is an imaginary conversation that Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother who died when he was nine years old might have had with someone asking about her son.

Chief Joseph, Nez Perce. (2001). "I will fight no more forever" in S. McIntire's *Book of great American speeches for young people* (pp.104-105). NY: John Wiley & Sons.

This is an excellent resource of famous speeches in chronological order.

Cohn, A. (1993). *From sea to shining sea: A treasury of American folklore and folktales* . NY: Scholastic, Inc.

This book contains a wonderful collection of poems and tales for children.

Dove, R. (1994). "Lady Freedom among Us" Retrieved on April 9, 2007 from www.lib.virginia.edu/etext

This poem describes Freedom, the statue that sits atop the dome of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. The poem explores what the statue stands for.

De Kay, J.T. (1989). *Meet Martin Luther King, Jr.* NY: Random House.

This is a very informative children's book with controlled vocabulary and very easy to read. It also contains excellent pictures.

Frost, R. (2001). "A road not taken." in Blackbirch's (Ed.) *Treasury of American poetry* (p. 73). Woodbridge, CT: Blackbirch Press.

This book contains an excellent collection of American poems. It contains an extensive collection of Frost's poems. Each poem has a beautiful colored illustration that provides further understanding of the poem.

Garland, H. (2004). "On the Mississippi" In J. Hollander's (Ed.). *Poetry for Young People: American poetry* , (p.41). NY: Sterling Publishing.

Grimes, N. (1994). *Meet Dinitra Brown* . NY: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

A collection of children's poems of a young African-American's upper elementary school experience.

Guernsey, J. B. (2003). *Hillary Rodham Clinton* . Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing.

This is an excellent children's book on the life of Hillary Clinton. It is written in clean and simplified language and it contains many interesting black and white photographs.

Guthrie, A. (1994). This land is your land. . In Cohn's *From sea to shining sea: A treasury of American folklore and folktales* . NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Hamilton, V. (1985). *People could fly: American black folktales*. NY: Scholastic.

This book is a collection of African- American tales. These twenty-four selections represent the main body of African-American folklore

Herrera, J. F. (2001). *Calling the doves* . San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

The author uses lyrical passages filled with metaphors to describe his life growing up as a migrant farm worker.

Hoberman, M. A. & Westcott, N.B. (2004). *Yankee Doodle* . Minneapolis, MN: Window Books Publishing.

This is a wonderfully illustrated picture book of this famous American Revolutionary song.

Kunhardt, E. (1993). *Honest Abe* . NY: Greenwillow Books.

This is an excellent picture book with beautiful illustrations of various events in Lincoln's life.

Hughes, L. (2004). I, too, hear America singing. In J. Hollander's (Ed.). *Poetry for Young People: American poetry* , p.27. NY: Sterling

Publishing.

This is collection of poetry includes selections from Langston Hughes, Walt Whitman, Hamlin Garland and Emma Lazarus.

Hughes, L. (1994). *The dream keeper and other poems* . NY: Scholastic Publishing.

This collection contains many poems that are appropriate to use with children.

Hughes, L. (2004). A Negro speaks of rivers. In J. Hollander's (Ed.). *Poetry for Young People: American poetry* , (p.27). NY: Sterling Publishing.

This is an excellent collection for elementary students; this poem is found on p. 27. This book is a wonderful collection of poetry that includes selections from Langston Hughes, Walt Whitman, Hamlin Garland and Emma Lazarus.

Hughes, L. (1995). We're all in the telephone book. In A. Rampersad's *Collected poems of Langston Hughes* (p. 603). NY: Alfred Knopf Publishing.

This book contains an appendix of many of Hughes' poems that are appropriate for teaching children including the poems "Telephone Book" and "When I studied my A-B-C's" are on p. 603.

Igus, T. (1998). *I see the rhythm* . San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

This is a book is a collection of African-American songs that celebrates the rich history of diverse African-American music to modern hip-hop.

Lazarus, E. (1993). The new colossus. In A. Cohn's (Ed.) *From sea to shining sea: A treasury of American folklore and folktales* , (p. 27). NY: Scholastic, Inc.

This poem refers to the Statue of Liberty as a woman welcoming all newcomers to America.

Levine, E. (1988). *If you traveled on the Underground Railroad* . NY: Scholastic Publishing.

This is a children's story of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. It is written in question and answer format, illustrates what it was like to be a slave trying to escape to freedom on the Underground Railroad. The book also covers topics such as "How did the Underground Railroad get its name?" and "What were the special signals and codes on the Underground Railroad?"

Levine, E. (1990). *If you lived at the time of Martin Luther King* . NY: Scholastic Publishing.

This is a great reference with excellent illustrations. Told in question and answer format, this book describes what it was like to live in the time of King.

Levine, E. (1996). *Traveled west in a covered wagon* . NY: Scholastic Publishing.

This book depicts the hardships of the trip and contains some excellent illustrations. The format of the book is question and answer.

Levitin, S. (1998). *Boomtown*. NY: Orchard Books Publishing.

This is a children's book that depicts the hardships of Amanda whose family moved to a mining town in California in search of gold. Amanda becomes a young entrepreneur whose makes money for her family selling pies to miners.

Lincoln, A. (1863). Gettysburg Address. In S. McIntire's *Book of great American speeches for young people* , (pp. 91-92). NY: John

Wiley & Sons, Inc.

This book contains many speeches of diverse Americans that would be helpful in presenting this unit including: Chief Joseph, Cesar Chavez, Langston Hughes, Susan B. Anthony, and Abraham Lincoln.

McGovern, A. (1992). *If you grew up with Abraham Lincoln*. NY: Scholastic Books.

This book is written in question and answer format, this book describes Lincoln's life as a young boy in Salem and in Springfield, Illinois. Some of the topics include "What kind of house would you live in?", "What were the biggest dangers on the frontier?", and "What did people do in Springfield for fun?"

Paschen, E. (Ed.). (2005). *Poetry speaks to children*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc.

This book contains excellent graphics and a CD that allows children to listen to many of the authors reading their own poems, including Robert Frost.

Smith, C. R. (2003). *I am America*. NY: Scholastic Inc.

This is a wonderful children's picture book with beautiful photographs of multicultural children.

Whitman, W. (2004a). I hear America singing. In J. Levin's (Ed.). *Poetry for Young People: Walt Whitman*, (p. 9). NY: Sterling Publishing.

Whitman, W. (2004b). "O Captain! My Captain." In J. Hollander's (Ed.). *Poetry for Young People: American poetry*, (p. 24). NY: Sterling Publishing.

Winter, J. (1988). *Follow the drinking gourd*. NY: Knopf Publishing.

This children's book contains a story of a sailor who aids the runaway slaves by telling them to follow drinking gourd or Big Dipper to northern freedom.

Teacher Resources

Echevarria, J., & Graves, A. (2003). *Sheltered content instruction: Teaching English-language learners with diverse abilities*. NY: Pearson Education.

This is an excellent resource on sheltered instruction methodology.

Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2004). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model*. NY: Pearson Education.

This book provides detailed examples of lesson plans using the SIOP Model of is an excellent resource on sheltered instruction methodology with detailed information on the Sheltered Instruction Operational Protocol (SIOP) model of Sheltered English.

Henn-Reinke, K., & Chesner, G. A. (2007). *Developing voice through the language arts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

This is an excellent teacher resource for strategies for adapting curriculum to reflect classroom diversity and provides excellent examples of how to teach the concept of voice in literature.

Hollander, J. (Ed.). (2004). *Poetry for young people: American poetry*. NY: Sterling Publishing.

This is an excellent teacher resource as a collection of poetry for children. It also contains

beautiful colored illustrations of the poems by Sally Wern Comporty.

Elbow, P.(Ed). (1994). Introduction. In P. Elbow's Landmark essays on voice and writing (p. xi). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This book is a collection of essays on voice and an excellent professional resource.

Howard, T. (Ed.). (2002). Mark Twain: People who made history. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press.

This book is an excellent resource for any educator planning to teach the works of Mark Twain. It is a book of collected essays on his work and life. There is also an excellent chronology of the life of Twain in this book.

Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2003). Teaching language in context. NY: Heinle & Heinle.

An excellent resource for background knowledge and strategies for teaching second language acquisition skills. It includes both theory and practice.

Walker, A. (1974). Langston Hughes: American poet. NY: Thomas P. Crowell.

This is an excellent biographical reference of Langston Hughes.

Appendix

Curriculum Unit Content Standards

Content Standards for English Language Learners

2.1 English language learners will use learning strategies to participate orally in academic settings. (Students will negotiate and manage interaction to accomplish tasks).

2.2 English language learners will use English to read and write in academic settings. (Students will develop reading and writing skills).

2.3 English language learners will use strategies to become independent learners in academic settings. (Students will use context to construct meaning; use graphic organizers to enhance comprehension; visualize images suggested by the text).

Language Arts/Writing Standard 2

Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience

2.0 Students will demonstrate their understanding through written, verbal, visual, musical and/or technological formats and will pre-edit, draft, revise, edit and publish/showcase one or more final literary products.

Responding to Literature

Students will recognize that readers and writers are influenced by individual, social, cultural and historical contexts. Students will explore multiple responses to literature.

Student will communicate with others to create interpretations and evaluations of written, oral and visual texts.

Social Studies

1.1 Students will read, view and listen to multiple sources that reflect the diversity of culture.

2.8 Students will investigate the goals and struggles of minority groups in America.

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>