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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2016 Volume II: Literature and Identity

The Confusion of Identity Exploration in Middle School

Guide for Curriculum Unit 16.02.09
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This 6th Grade literacy unit focuses on the Required Core Novel *The Skin I'm In*, by Sharon G. Flake. This unit explores the confusing journey to finding identity as a middle school aged student. The complex identities of five characters from the novel, Maleeka, Char, Mrs. Saunders, Caleb and John-John, are analyzed with multiple supplemental texts. The project for the students includes a daily "Identity Journal," in which they analyze the characters using text evidence from both the novel and supplemental texts, and then compare these with what they are feeling or seeing within themselves. The unit culminates with a drawing of the student alongside the character the most identify with. Students present their journals with the drawings.

(For use with 6th Grade Literacy, specifically the Quarter 1 Fiction Core Novel *The Skin I'm In*.)

Keywords: identity, core novel, *The Skin I'm In*, race, gender, ethnicity, bullying, middle school

(Developed for Literacy - Core Novel, grade 6; recommended for Literacy - Core Novel, grade 6)

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