



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2017 Volume I: Adapting Literature

Approaches to Thinking about Film and Literature: Adapting Literature to Capture Authentic Understandings

Curriculum Unit 17.01.07
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Synopsis

Students who are authentically engaged in reading ask questions about the text, make their own interpretations, and connect the stories they read to their own lives. Moving from written works to their film counterparts opens the original piece to different kinds of interpretations. My unit focuses on creating a space in which students read through different lenses, produce different meanings, outcomes, and understandings in order to strengthen critical thinking skills and to build an infinite capacity for meaning. By examining the underlying embedded themes and then seeing how those ideas are adapted into other media, students will be better positioned to make higher ordered inferences. What impact might a documentary, movie, or animated version have on the readers? What might students notice that they otherwise may have missed in the text version? What connections can students make between text and film versions? Adaptation, the transformation of text to film, is apropos to this unit tentatively titled Adapting Literature to Capture Authentic Understandings as it seeks to present strategies to help students use select literary devices in order to help them understand implied universal themes.

Introduction

As a middle school ELA teacher, I recognize the value of stories and their enduring understandings. Thus, I strive to introduce and immerse students in reading content-rich literature. This is not always easy to accomplish given the high demands to satisfy both curricular expectations and the time it takes to teach them. It is widely recognized that schools can and should do more to engage students in the kinds of reading that enable them to become literate, well-informed adults. This is done by emphasizing real-world critical reading of sources (like magazines, newspapers, and scholarly essays) that provide worldly background knowledge and molds students into informed citizens. It also lays a pathway to other disciplines like social studies and world history where students can use their interdisciplinary logic to make connections between what they read and current events.

Widely successful book to film adaptations like *Harry Potter*, *The Hunger Games*, and *Twilight* series are the immediate examples students often reference as their reading choices. The entertainment value of these is measurable and their enduring classic themes (good vs. evil or death and resurrection for instance), bond readers in a milieu of fantasy and the fantastic. But, more complex pieces (like memoirs and narratives for example), are often excluded from their personal libraries. Thus, I see importance in exploring what new understandings may be gleaned when students are challenged to analyze more complex literature. Therefore, I seek to create a unit that considers integrating content-rich materials into the established curriculum in new and innovative ways in order to engage and assist students as they hone their reading comprehension skills.

This unit is on par with the 2017 Yale New Haven Teachers Institute seminar on adapting literature because it explores the intersection between texts and how students will interpret their relevance through other forms. I saw participating in the Institute as a great opportunity to add another layer to my teaching in helping to expose students to content-rich literature and to help them independently apply reading comprehension strategies. In fact, decades of research evidence the correlations between strong literacy skills on cognitive functions. However, it is argued that the way reading is taught is not conducive to producing a love for literacy which is why many students are disinclined to read. Consider the argument that schools overemphasize teaching to too many standards thus producing students who are memorizers instead of thinkers. Thus, we must ask ourselves to consider how the simple act of reading can enhance students' critical thinking when they are provided space to actually read. In fact, a hallmark of my best practice is to integrate a plethora of diverse reading materials into the established curriculum as a means to support students as they examine the weight of asserted meanings, read with specific intentions, and address the subjectivity of their own interpretations. The challenge that I have had is getting my reluctant readers to critically engage in the materials presented that helps them shift from entry level skills to becoming independently attuned to relational patterns of content and language which convey overall meanings. Since taking the film adaptation seminar at Yale, I have been challenged to think about how film and literature intersect. I like to expand on this by using a broad interpretation of what adaptation means within the context of my teaching and its impact on student learning. So, I plan to spend time reflecting on my pedagogical practices as I develop this unit.

Rationale

Two poignant enduring understandings anchoring the New Haven Public School Middle School ELA curriculum are for active readers to 1. draw inferences about what authors do not explicitly state, and 2. analyze the interactions between individuals, events, or ideas in a text to deepen meaning. To master these understandings, students read the core text entitled *When Elephants Fight: The Lives of Children in Conflict in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Uganda* and then write their own personal narratives. This book foregrounds the issues seen in current world events and is the catalyst for this unit primarily due to reactions of students who want to know more about the lives of the children telling their stories. So, I carefully selected materials that are powerful mosaics of thematically rich stories centered around characters and themes focused on attributes like bravery, resiliency, and determination. My unit does not specifically focus on the geo-political issues driving the stories, but does recognize the overarching threads that ties them together. Given that this unit is to present of critical thinking strategies, I have chosen a variety of novels that I believe are socially conscious, are of high interest, and are appropriate in my intention to challenge students to

engage in deep analysis. Specifically, students will examine the works of Shan Tan's book *The Arrival* (2006), Kristen Applegate's *Home of the Brave* (2007), Colm Tóibín's novel *Brooklyn* (2009), and its 2015 film adaptation. The sources are distinctly different in style, but are content-rich and share the same universal themes. Lesson plans can literally span an entire school year, but for the purpose of this unit, students will examine a literary device in each selection in order to determine overarching enduring understandings. I recognize there are many ways students can approach this and analyzing a literary device in each novel may seem narrow in focus, however this purposefully done given the time constraints for the third quarter, and the volume of reading I hope to be accomplished in both this unit and curriculum. Our focus on literary devices in earnest will happen during the fourth quarter--I like to think of this unit as a great way to introduce such devices which will be expanded upon later as a secondary goal.

The target audience are middle school ELA students; however, the fluidity of this unit is applicable to any classroom. Additionally, this unit may be used in conjunction with the NHPS third and fourth quarter ELA middle school curricular expectations. For example, *Home of the Brave* is a powerful nonfiction account of the main character's bravery in the midst of political instability resulting in the deaths of his core family members. It is a middle school level book written in short prose with a mixture of metaphors, similes, and allusions that insists upon the reader to explore the deeper meanings behind the main character's trial and tribulations associated with his assimilation into American culture. I chose the book *Brooklyn* as a challenge for my students. Given that this novel is turned into a film, I anticipate that students will be able to use both the text and film version to support their levels of critical thinking. This book is a denser adult level read, however there are elements of the story that are translatable to the middle school audience. To assist with the flow of the unit, I will most likely summarize the character and conflicts in order to enable students to focus on the main goals of determining enduring themes. Also, the wordless graphic novel *The Arrival* will be used to link both stories. It is praised for its stunning visual impact on its readers. Its panels of graphics flow together resembling that of a short film (hopefully, student will make a connection to the point of adaptation here) and emphasizes the experience of assimilation into an unknown culture. I chose this novel as it builds a sense of empathy readers should develop for its characters and help students make connections to the other chosen texts. All novels are praised for their literary sophistication and provides the rigor, depth, and breadth of knowledge I seek to accomplish with this unit as students engage in differentiated ways of reading.

Since the overall goal of this unit is to have students analyze a literary device from each text to create a metanarrative on its universal themes, I think it important to bring more context to why I believe in the significance of this unit. Since most authors do not explicitly state what is intended, students will be challenged to try various ways to uncover implicit text meanings. During classroom instruction, I encourage students to visualize the text as a winter garden- what is seen on its surface will slowly transform and reveal a different picture upon the passage of time. I use this conceptual metaphorical explanation to initiate student understandings of author's intent, particularly when reading complex stories. This underscores why students should be aware of the significance behind the surface even if they are not initially sure of its meanings. By going beyond surface details, I hope students learn to become more attuned to the intentions behind the text. Moreover, when students consider the process by which they interpret texts, they can understand how meaning can fit together to reveal, define, and help them to reconsider larger understandings.

Grasping overall implicit meanings is a challenge, especially for reluctant readers, given that the skill requires abstract thinking. I appreciate how Silver et al describes this challenge as difficult to model, design lessons around, and assess. If this skill is challenging for teachers, imagine the hurdles experienced by developing readers as they grapple with making evaluations about texts not readily explicit or immediately understood. Critical reading can be particularly daunting for any student who is confronted with multilayered themes that

require abstract thinking- a prerequisite for higher-order thinking and 21st century learning skills. This is the paradox of text, what students read is distinctly different from the cognitive process of reading, and they must confront these differences within the context of discovering the “it” that extends beyond basic text understandings.

Objectives

I am confident the selected objectives will help students become proficient in these skills. These objectives correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards--the former are grade specific, the latter are broader standards--both work to define the end of year skills students are expected to demonstrate. This unit seeks to meet two overall aspects of the K-12 College and Career Readiness (CCR) reading anchor standards. By the end of the school year students can: 1. Synthesize ideas, articulate their own, and confirm their understandings. 2. They understand author's intent while questioning the author's assumptions in order to draw their own logical conclusions. I believe these two anchor standards best compliment the ELA middle school curricular objectives selected for this unit. I thought it useful to categorize objectives most complimentary to how I will scaffold student learning. The first objectives R1-R3 focus on key ideas and details whereas R4 focuses on craft and structure.

Objective R1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text: The first objective will be introduced during our viewing of *The Arrival* . This is a wordless visual graphic novel in which students will be required to make inferences and support conclusions drawn from their observations. Students will be challenged to use their background knowledge to form their interpretations based in the visual details presented. Our class discussion of the author's use of pictures rather than words will help activate students' inferential skills.

Objective R2: Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text: Students will examine excerpts from the book and film *Brooklyn* in order to determine its central ideas or themes. We will then use class discussion to connect all the ideas/themes gleaned from the readings to the interpretations made when reading the text and then watching film adaptation of *The Arrival* . This book has been translated into a short orchestral film available online. During this time, students will draw tighter inferences about the enduring understandings that connect both stories.

Objective R3: Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events). This objective calls for students to analyze how and why ideas develop and interact over the course the text. Students will then use their background information from their previous readings to analyze the central ideas/themes, and to draw comparisons between all three texts in order to determine their unified enduring understandings.

Objective R4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone: This objective focuses on craft and structure. It requires students to use their interpretive skills to determine how words and phrases are used in a text and to draw conclusions around those interpretations. This will be met during our reading of *Home of the Brave* . Students will specifically focus on the connotative and figurative

meanings and then extend their interpretations to analysis on how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Strategies

Comprehension and decoding strategies are two tools needed to help students become critical readers. Comprehension focuses on metacognitive skills where students are guided to think not only about what they read but *how* they read. These strategies are categorized by skills like making connections, questioning the text, and making inferences. Decoding helps students with unknown words by providing strategies to figure out new and complex words within contextual appropriateness. Students combine these two strategies to synthesize what they read. With this in mind, I will incorporate several of Marzano's ¹ instructional strategies and use scaffolding to offer guidance and support as students build upon their decoding and comprehension. Research-based instructional strategies are a key component of what I already know how to best in my classroom, therefore I will use strategies like QAR (Question/Answer/Relationship), the Frayer Model (an advanced graphic organizer), and didactic journaling. These strategies are pervasive in most school settings and can be found in any ELA classroom. It is important to note that I anticipate resistance from some students given that many are reluctant readers. However, these strategies are proven to have the greatest positive effect on student achievement regardless of ability and grade level, and I have used these with great success in the past. With this in mind, I envision this approach as an agreement between traditional reading and using a broad interpretation of film adaptation as way to complement students' learning styles while supporting them as they hone their reading comprehension skills.

QAR (Question/Answer/Relationship):

Since I want students to see the connections between the three distinct stories used for this unit, I am confident the QAR method is an appropriate strategy. Overall, I have found that the question/answer/relationship strategy is very useful teaching students how to use their critical thinking as a means to improve their reading comprehension. QAR strategy is not a new concept as it is taught in the primary grades. The difference here is that students will be pushed to understand the relationship between asking strong qualitative questions and inferring the author's intent. Qualitative questioning may be a new concept to my students, so I seek to provide yearlong practice. So, this is a skill that is used throughout the course of the year and as students build confidence, the expectation is for stronger and more independent articulation between explicit and implicit understandings. First, students learn that there are different types of questions often utilized by strong independent critical readers: 1. Right There: They are the obvious explicit questions/answers easily identified in the text. 2. Think and Search: These are questions generated from implicit text ideas where students must think and infer. This requires that students do more analysis of what is not readily seen. 3. On my own: These are conclusions students draw based on the explicit and implicit questioning. Students are challenged to arrive at these conclusions independently. It is my intention for students to recognize that the quality of the question influences the quality of their inferences; thus they must consider the complexity of the question before developing an answer. QAR is a useful tool because students learn the difference between low and high level questioning; this helps them check their own understanding by relying on the text, and it helps students to critically engage in their reading. I plan to use QAR throughout the unit before, during, and after reading, but will rely on it the heaviest during the initiating exercise explained in the classroom activities section of this unit.

Fray Model

The Frayer Model is also seen in many ELA classrooms because it is also identified as a high yield nonlinguistic strategy. This model is flexible enough to be used as a simple or advanced graphic organizer. I appreciate the fluidity of this because it allows me to provide differentiated instructional strategies to students with varied reading levels. I also appreciate this model as it is useful in underscoring the power in figurative language like similes, metaphors, and analogies. I selected this model specifically because of the prose style of one of the authors we will study. By using this model, students will be assisted in identifying the relational patterns of language and author's intent. It is critical that students be guided with instruction that allows them to see the relationships between what they are reading and how they read, so word analysis and vocabulary building is a key component. I will mainly use this strategy during reading as students will be required to do some level of analysis and synthesis. Students will create a four-square model that prompts them to think about and describe the following: 1. Define the term (analysis). 2. Describe its characteristics (analysis). 3. Give examples like synonyms (synthesis), and 4. Give non-examples (synthesis). Given the complexity of the text they will be reading, this model is critical because it stresses how students can understand words within the larger context of their reading. Essentially, I will use this to push students to develop their interpretations around the enduring understandings not explicitly seen in the texts.

Didactic Journaling

Didactic journaling falls under the category of summarizing and note taking-an identified high yield strategy. This type of journaling can be considered a more advanced sophisticated way for students to critically engage with the text. Didactic journaling is a way for students to practice how to differentiate between unnecessary and important information while writing and analyzing information. Since the goal is to support students' critical thinking skills through reading comprehension, didactic journaling is a sound way to facilitate critical thinking of academic content. During this time, students will incorporate their personal responses with key text ideas. These responses can range from students' focus on themes, characters, events, gathering of textual evidence to support inferences for example, in efforts to evidence how they process what is being read. Students will be guided to structure their journaling by questioning, making connections, predicting, clarifying, reflecting, or evaluating. Summarizing and note taking is not a new concept, given that students are taught these skills the previous year, but the term didactic may be a new concept. I plan to introduce this as a higher form of the familiar terms summary and note taking and will do this by modeling through incorporating aspects of the Frayer model by defining the term and giving examples. This will be detailed in the classroom activities section of my unit.

Classroom Activities

The classroom activities below are ideas teachers can use in their instruction in support of student learning. They specifically seek to support struggling readers by presenting alternative forms to "traditional" reading. By using various media, students can be supported in connecting their lives to the context of the stories they read and help bring clarity to the essential, larger understandings and purposes. The activities are structured weekly during reading and writing workshop. I provide my students with organizers like timelines, a list of our readings, objectives, assignments, and homework so that they have a clear roadmap of what is expected to be accomplished. It is important to note that I intend to integrate this unit during the second quarter of the

school year because students will have already read our ELA required text *When Elephants Fight* . These are vignette-like mosaics of survival stories as told by the children living in areas engulfed in civil wars and political instability. During this time, students will engage in learning objectives related to the goal of this unit and will hopefully see the connections between all of the objectives. I am fortunate to work in a school that supports and expects integrated units of study in addition to the NHPS curriculum, so implementing this unit should be seamless. Also, keeping the calendar in mind and that this book can literally span several quarters, I have learned some useful tips in keeping with a manageable current of lessons. First, I use the provided audio book to help students with their fluency. For struggling readers, I may do small group instruction or focus on chunked sections of the book. I also assign the section entitled “The Conflict” for homework if students wish to read in more detail about the geopolitical issues alluded in the stories.

Building confidence with strategies: (Week one):

Before delving into the lesson, I will first support students with clear understandings of how to effectively use the strategies associated with this unit. Therefore, I will use the Gradual Release of Responsibility model commonly known amongst teachers as the I Do, You Do, We Do model. This is an example of scaffolded instruction and has earned national recognition as a highly effective approach for moving instruction from teacher dependent-whole group-student independent practice. During the course of the unit, students will be expected to move from the novice stage reliant upon teacher modeling, through practitioner stage requiring teacher support, to expert or mastery stage where little or no teacher intervention is required. I have found this to be a way to set students up for success; so during this time, students will be taught how to use the QAR, Frayer Model, and didactic journals. I will present them with teacher modeled examples on each strategy by using a short excerpt from the Tedtalk titled *The Danger of a Single Story* told by author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Students will see this video again in its entirety during the initiating activity described below. I will also allude to how we will use the intersection between texts and how we interpret their relevance through other forms. I will explain to students that we will use multiple sources in both print and film. I believe this will get students excited about what they will be learning and counterbalance any anxieties associated with the task of using multiple sources at once.

Initiating Activity (Week Two):

I am inspired by the Tedtalk titled *The Danger of a Single Story*. Adichie’s suspicion of the “singular story” resonates throughout this unit, that when we reject the single story, we realize that there is never a single story about any one person or place. I plan to play this talk and ask students to relate their background knowledge about any stories they may have read in their lifetime to what they may deem are the big ideas in the Tedtalk and in *When Elephants Fight* . Given that initial learning involves transfer that is based on previous experiences and prior knowledge, this initiating step is needed. Given our work on *When Elephants Fight* presents multiple stories around themes and traits like bravery and resilience for example, and having already received instruction with our core text, students will have context to reach back to. I intend to have students use their core text to activate their understandings of the Tedtalk. I will prompt them (when necessary) to infer that we will be engaging in other texts to help make stronger connections. Students will engage in a turn and share session where they will talk to their partners about any possible connections. I will place the guiding question on the board: Why does the author believe a single story can be dangerous? to help anchor the discussion. I believe this is a unique way to get students thinking.

Reading Workshop: To get the most out of the video, we will watch it at least three times. First review will be used to help students get the gist of the talk and make connections back to our learnings from week one. The

second review will call for students to use the QAR method I previously taught to capture their initial understandings. Students will engage in a “turn and share” activity where they will articulate their QAR to others in efforts to share ideas.

Writing workshop: The NHPS curriculum uses the Writing Workshop model as a time for students to engage in purposeful writing and may engage in various writing activities to explain how they use their writing to support their thinking. During this time students will use their QARs to complete a brief-write on what they have gleaned from the video (brief-writes are a term used throughout NHPS curriculum. These are short sometimes informal writing pieces done by students evidencing their thinking. These are usually done in their notebook as an abbreviated form of journaling or a less formalized version of paragraph writing). They will be encouraged to connect to their prior readings as well. Note, students already know how to do brief-writes as standard classroom practice. This is reiterated throughout all grade levels. Students will peer-conference, add to, or revise their brief-writes during this time.

Connections to text (Week Three): *The Arrival* and *Brooklyn*

Reading Workshop: Students will watch a visual narrative of Shaun Tan’s book *The Arrival* . I chose this for several reasons. Contextually, it is an immersive narrative around the theme of belonging--a theme that is interwoven throughout all the stories we will read for this unit. This is short a graphic novel with no words that can be digested in one-two days. These types of novels are of high interest to many of my reluctant readers. Most importantly, the photorealist drawings underpin the implied theme in an impactful way. The third reason why I chose this book is because of its ability to help students make textual connections. The images provide a narrative into the life of its characters--some characters have fled from a dangerous homeland--and visually tells of their struggle to assimilate in a strange new land. I will then ask students to compare frames from the film version of the book *Brooklyn* . I will select two frames: one will be from when the main character first gets on the boat departing from her native country to America and the second will be from when the main character goes through the halls of Ellis Island. I will ask students to infer the emotion of the frame by directing them to focus on the character’s facial expressions. These two frames are reminiscent of the emotions expressed by the characters in *The Arrival* . Students should make connects between the frames as they will be asked to chart or diagram the expressions they notice that help them make connections to both stories. Although it is set in the 1950’s, students can make connections to the fears and struggles of the character as she leaves her homeland and family to make a new life for herself in America. These frames will focus on the main character’s emotions as she leaves her homeland and arrives in America. Here, student may rely on the obvious differences. I will challenge them to go beyond what is explicit. To help them, I will incorporate excerpts from the book. For example: “She was nobody here. It was not just that she had no friends and family; it was rather that she was a ghost in this room, in the streets on the way to work, on the shop floor. Nothing meant anything,” (p.67). Students will be asked to connect the excerpt to the images in both stories and compare what they determined as they charted in their notebooks. As we explore the book, I will place guiding questions on the board. Students will use these questions as a springboard to generate connections between what they have already read. Students will be challenge to write a narration for any section that speaks most to them. They will turn and share, and then transfer the big ideas from discussion to their notes.

Writing Workshop: During our examination of the book, we will start the Frayer Model to connect content specific vocabulary. During this time, I will provide several vocabulary words that students should incorporate into their narratives. Some examples are: 1. Refugee, 2. Immigrant, 3. Assimilation, 4. Jeopardy, and 5. Ancestor, 6. Citizen, and 7. Naturalization. I will then challenge students to create their own versions of the

Frayer Model to independently generate words based on the connections made as they read. These words should be incorporated into a revision of their narratives produced during reading workshop.

Analysis of Author's Style (Week Four): *Home of The Brave*

Reading Workshop: This will be the anchor text for this unit. This story is similar to *The Arrival* as its main character is relocated from his war-torn homeland and struggles to assimilate to America. We learn that his family is slain, with the exception of his mother who is reunited with her son by the end of the novel. As students read, they will focus on the literary style of the author. This book is written in prose and easily read, although the prose has deeper meanings which calls for students to draw inferences about the larger implicit ideas, focusing on why the author chose specific language will help with this skill. I plan to provide daily questions and excerpts to help students focus their thinking as they read. These questions will range in complexity but will mostly be higher-level and open-ended qualitative questions seen and practiced during their QAR work. I will use their daily brief writes on these questions to spark critical discussions and help to integrate the students' perspectives about the emerging enduring understandings presented in the story. I plan to give them excerpts from different parts of the novel, for example:

A man I helped to settle here

taught me a saying from Africa.

I'll bet you would like it:

A cow is God with a wet nose. (p. 14)

As students read further and learn how the main character assimilates, students will be directed back the book *Brooklyn*. I will provide additional excerpts like "She thought it was strange that the mere sensation of savoring the prospect of something could make her think for a while that is must be the prospect of home," (p. 131). Here they will make connections between the two by comparing how each character's struggle is interwoven.

Writing Workshop: Here students will use their didactic journals. I will look for how students articulate their learning through their personal responses, ideas about themes, and any emerging ideas about universal understandings. Students will codify their thinking in order to organize and present their thoughts: Students will record the narrative they generated during their reading on the left side of their notebooks. On the right, they will respond to their own ideas using the following codes: (Q) Questioning-ask about what is unclear to you, (C) Connect-describe the connections made from your like, world, or other texts, (P) Predict-anticipate what will occur in as you read or what may happen in the next anticipated novel you will read, (CL) Clarify-answer any questions generated from peer conferencing or make adjustments in predictions, (R) Reflect- think broadly about the universal themes in the text. Describe any emerging enduring understandings you have, and (E) Evaluate-make judgements about what you think is the author's implied intentions. I plan to read and respond to each of their journals and encourage them to respond back. This will be accomplished during peer conferencing time.

Culminating Activity (Week Five):

This part of the unit will focus on students demonstrating their understandings through our culminating

activity. My first thought was to have them create mini documentaries about their personal stories in the style of the authors we have studied. These documentaries should tie back to the notion that there is no one single story explored during the initiating activity and throughout this unit. However, this may be quite ambitious since securing resources may be a challenge. Therefore, I will leave this idea open to further exploration. Students will, however, create narratives based on their own lives in connections to the stories explored. First, students will go back to any of the texts, a piece of their journal, or notes and select something that speaks to them. Second, they will incorporate this selection into their work. Next, students will be asked to consider their audience. This can be open to the school community, peers, family, or it can be private and only for them (and the teacher for assessment purposes). Then, they will write one clear sentence about the topic their selection. This topic sentence should capture why it is important to them. During this unit, students learned that each author had a different way of communicating ideas (using short or long prose and visual imagery). As they compose their work, students will be encouraged to “write in the style” of one of the authors. Here I will encourage student choice. They can decide if they want to use the form of short or long prose, or visual imagery. Or they can draw or sketch images complementary to *The Arrival*. Students will also be challenged to write a rhetorical question that touches upon the enduring understandings. Students will either answer their own question or (to the level of their personal comfort) give their narrative to a peer to answer as a statement of overall meaning.

Resources

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The Danger of a Single Story." *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The Danger of a Single Story | TED Talk | TED.com*. TedGlobal, July 2009. Web. 27 June 2017.

A powerful Tedtalk on having a global awareness of people, places, and events. It was used as part of the initiating activity for my unit.

Applegate, Katherine. *Home of the Brave*. Los Angeles, CA: Braille Institute, 2015. Print

This book is used as the primary text for this unit. It is written in prose and easily accessible to students of all reading levels. This book has become a part of the required reading for my school.

Corrigan, Timothy. *Film and Literature: An Introduction and Reader*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012. Print.

This book was the required reading for the Yale Teacher Institute seminar. It was helpful in the development of this unit providing context for film analysis. I used this book to help define how I would use the term “adaptation” for the purposes of this unit.

Framer, Dorothy Ann., Wayne C. Fredrick, and Herbert J. Klausmeier. *A Schema for Testing the Level of Concept Mastery: Report from the Project on Situational Variables and Efficiency of Concept Learning*. Madison: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1969. Print.

Although printed in 1969, this book presents sound pedagogical strategy. As teacher, I found this resource helpful in researching the appropriate instructional strategies for this unit.

Gallagher, Kelly. "Reversing Readicide." *Educational Leadership: Reading to Learn: Reversing Readicide*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Mar. 2010. Web. 20 Apr. 2017.

This article was helpful in building my argument for this unit. The article presents a clear rationale for time to read.

Lemov, Doug. "How Knowledge Powers Reading." *Educational Leadership: Literacy in Every Classroom: How Knowledge Powers Reading* . Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2017. Web. 20 May 2017.

This publication was helpful in solidifying my ideas for this unit. It provides useful instructional strategies.

Lemov, Doug, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway. *Reading Reconsidered: A Practical Guide to Rigorous Literacy Instruction* . San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Brand, 2016. Print.

This book was helpful in setting the type of rigor I want to convey for this unit.

Lent, ReLeah Cossett Cossett. "Chapter 2. Background Knowledge: The Glue That Makes Learning Stick." *Background Knowledge: The Glue That Makes Learning Stick* . ASCD, 2012. Web. 21 May 2017.

This article speaks to the research on background knowledge as an important instructional strategy to build. It provides data gleaned from research and shares the outcomes of the studies done. I find it helpful in determining the strategies used for my unit.

Marzano, Robert J. "Research on What Works in Schools." *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement* . Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2004. Web. 20 May 2017.

This reading is extremely helpful in crafting strategies for this unit. Marzano is widely respected for his research on high yield strategies. I reference his work often during lesson planning.

Shanahan, Timothy. "Common Core: Close Reading." *Scholastic* . Scholastic Teacher, 2017. Web. 15 May 2017.

I often access articles of interest from Scholastic. This is a quick professional read which adds context to the tone of my unit objectives.

Tan, Shaun. *The Arrival and Sketches from a Nameless Land* . Melbourne: Lothian, 2013. Print.

This book provides the content for what I expect to teach as a result of this unit. It is a powerful graphic novel easily understood by students of any reading level.

Toibin, Colm. *Brooklyn* . N.p.: Penguin, 2016. Print.

This book chronicles the journey of an immigrant girl from her homeland of Ireland to America. It is written in long prose and provides visual backdrop of the in the 1950's as people migrated to the United States.

Walters, Eric, and Adrian Bradbury. *When Elephants Fight: The Lives of Children in Conflict in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda* . Victoria, B.C.: Orca Book, 2008. Print.

This book is the required reading for the New Haven Public Schools ELA curriculum. It is the catalyst for this unit.

Appendix

New Haven Public Schools ELA curriculum in partnership with the Common Core Standards focuses on preparing student for college and career readiness. Connecticut adopted the Common Core State Standards in June of 2010. District academic standards are on par with the Common Core. In English Language Arts, the requirement is for students to 1. read and comprehend complex texts and 2. to increase in reading nonfiction/informational texts. I believe this is accomplished in my unit as the selected texts vary in style and complexity. They also range in both fiction and nonfiction genres. Writing expectations require students to cite text evidence, make arguments, and see the pros and cons in the arguments. Although my unit does not specifically focus on argument writing. The writing workshop aspect in the classroom activities section of this unit does satisfy using text evidence to make logical conclusions and draw sound connections between the presented texts. Additionally, district academic standards require students to develop a wide range of academic vocabulary and language. This is addressed in my unit as vocabulary acquisition is addressed during the reading workshop activities outlined for this unit.

Endnote

1. Marzano, "Research Based Strategies" in Classroom Instruction That Works, 13-111.

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