



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2022 Volume II: The Long Fight for a Free Caribbean, 1700s-1959

The Origins of Colorism in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic and its Effects on Identity Formation

Curriculum Unit 22.02.04
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Unit Overview

The mandated district curriculum opens with a realistic fictional novel that students relate to, *The Skin I'm In*, by Sharon G. Flake. It addresses many social and cultural issues the students face today. One of the most impactful issues is that of colorism. Surprisingly enough students experience it, unknowingly practice it but do not understand or know the concept or the history behind it. Colorism has become learned behavior. The unit seeks to connect the history of colorism and its subliminal practice today. By the end of the unit students will be able to recognize the characteristics of colorism and begin to modify self-identities rejecting stereotypes stemming from this social phenomenon.

Rational:

Over the years I have always been me, a Puerto Rican woman born and raised in New Haven Connecticut. I was raised to be proud of my heritage and to stand tall and honor my customs. I never really thought of colorism in or outside of Puerto Rico. My understanding was that we are Puerto Rican, no matter the color of our skin, or the regionalisms with which we speak. I was under the notion that the Puerto Rican was the perfect mix of Spanish, Taino, and African. Outwardly no one claimed that their Afro Latino heritage was more dominant than any other. That simple omission is what colorism stems from. Puerto Rico also prides itself on being Hispanic, just another way to negate or lessen the "blackness" of a nation. I was in for a rude awakening when I moved to Puerto Rico and my "color blindness" was not the norm nor was it a popular idea shared by many. During this time I began to experience being referenced by the color of my skin—"la blanquita". I was also called "la Americana". These labels were offensive and at first somewhat confusing. Re-enforcing my "whiteness" negates any family I may have that is predominately black. I thought all along that we were all just Puerto Rican and our history and life experiences were common and shared.

Through further studies and investigations, I realized that this rhetoric is part of Puerto Rican history because many people on the Island truly believe that by identifying as mestizo, they are acknowledging their history.

It gets them off the hook about admitting that Puerto Rico has Black citizens as well as a history of racial inequality of its own. These experiences awakened my curiosity, and I began to wonder why we are such a diverse population and how did we come to inhabit this tiny island. I began to learn my real history. I began to learn that we had people from all over the world move to Puerto Rico and settle, starting and growing families. I also learned that these settlers brought with them strong foundations in racism and colorism that still exist today.

Through the seminar, I became painfully aware that societies were also formed based on the exploitation of Africans and creoles. These colonizing people, mostly European came onto the islands with money and power feeling superior. They took the liberty to equate power and status with skin color. The honest truth is that history can sometimes be ugly, but that history is ours and we have a responsibility to our students to teach them this history because it is part of who they are. When we are talking about the history of a people, what is most satisfying is when students are able to connect and realize that where they come from and who they become are tied to our ancestors.

Aside from my own experiences in Puerto Rico and Connecticut, I would like to explore and incorporate the aspect of colorism in the Dominican Republic. Our two countries are similar in some aspects, and many Puerto Ricans and Dominicans have united on many fronts. Through conversations with friends who are Dominican, I have found that colorism is just as much an issue for them as it is for Puerto Ricans. I have learned that Dominicans only want to acknowledge their Spanish and Indigenous roots because if they go as far as to acknowledge their Afro-Latino side, they are essentially admitting that they have ties to Haitians and to slavery in colonial Santo Domingo. Upon seeing it as a common issue, I would like explore if there are any differences and if Puerto Rico being a territory of the United States has any influence on colorism.

I currently teach at Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy for Global Awareness in the Hill section of New Haven, Connecticut. My students are sixth grade English Language Arts students. They come from modest income homes. We have a large population of students from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Afghanistan. The ELA curriculum devotes most of Unit One focusing on identity and self-esteem. The subtopic of colorism fits in well with the rest of the curriculum unit because a main character in one of the books we read suffers the effects of colorism. Many students are not familiar with the term colorism. Upon further discussion, I realized that although the term is unfamiliar, their experiences of suffering discrimination based on colorism are not. When students realize the words and phrases they choose reflect colorism they are shocked. These lessons impact all our students because colorism happens in all circles. Social Studies tends to lend itself to these topics but we as Language Art teachers can incorporate nonfiction readings that teach us where colorism stems from.

By working with my students this year, I am able to appreciate that they want to learn more about their history and where they come from. They have also demonstrated the need to understand that when we refer to Afro Latinos we are bridging cultures together through a history that unifies, not divides. By that same token, students can come to appreciate those cultural customs that make us different always taking into account that one culture is not better than the other. The students have become quite proficient in formulating higher level questions that guide them in research and reading. I can offer them this new learning by tapping in to nonfiction historical articles and current event pieces. It is also important to incorporate maps so the students can get a geographic sense of where we are located in relation to the rest of the world. Offering my students these multiple vehicles to learn a lesson in identity only helps to solidify theirs.

A unit on colorism will also enhance our unit on social justice issues. As I reflect on the topic of colorism and how it affects us in society today, I remember the words of Dr. Martin Luther King when he said that he dreamed of a Nation that would judge not by the color of one's skin but by the content of one's character. In this instance he was referring to racism and discrimination but it is a concept that also applies to colorism. Introducing colorism in the identity unit and bridging it into the social justice unit will help us examine and gain a deeper understanding of how colorism and social justice influence each other. . In unit one we are able to introduce the concept of colorism and see it one dimensional. In our social issues unit we can bridge the introduction to colorism and dive deeper in to how it affects us today. Students will be able to read and identify where they are seeing colorism demonstrated and how they intend on raising awareness in order put an end to the practice.

Presenting colorism, its origins and history opens the door to how we view societies getting along or not. We are able to appreciate that even within our own ethnicities we tend to discriminate because society has set a norm which clearly states that "white is alright". Within my unit, I want to expose students to those "dichos" that perpetuate colorism and discrimination. Students should be able to understand how these sayings and phrases came about and how they stem from racism and European supremacy. Another important element for me is to bring art in as an effective tool to demonstrate that even artistic creativity over the centuries was influenced by colorism. Our students need the time and opportunity to observe, analyze and then verbalize without feeling pressure and worrying about whether they are right or wrong. This is a skill that through art they can develop and later on transfer to creating a self-identity free of colorism.

Historical Background

Slavery began very quickly after the arrival of the Spanish in the 1500s. While it had an uneven history in Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, peaking at different times, neither territory achieved abolition until the 19th century (1873 and 1822, respectively). It is a moral obligation to explain to students why the slave trade existed and who garnered the most benefits from the situation. History cannot be manipulated to benefit one people, race ethnicity, or group. The facts are that sugar was the most important export at the height of the slave trade and Europeans (whites) owned plantations, sugar mills, and coffee farms. They were not going to do the job themselves, so they used more and more enslaved people to do the work they refused to do. The enslaved people did all the work but the Europeans (and resident elites) reaped all the benefits and continued to exploit people of color. Slaves were deemed as property.

Once sugar declined and slavery was abolished, blacks and European-descended people were left to try and co-exist. Very little changed and now blacks were "free" but most had no choice but to continue to work for the white man and be subjected to poor conditions and pay. Although slavery was abolished, the white man never lost their hold thus perpetuating inequality. I would like to use fictional and non-fictional pieces to demonstrate the lives people led on both sides. Pieces of literature that illustrate interactions between the Europeans and the slaves could help students understand relationships that have transpired over the years. Students will be able to appreciate that slavery touched much of the "new world" and our ancestors. I also want students to understand that slavery happened on our Islands, not just in America. Many of my students realize that cultures are different but then they equate these differences with being inferior because of the color of their skin or the language they speak. I think it is important for students to learn that many important people in history have been people of color who have been disregarded or forgotten because of the discrimination.

I want to be able to take full advantage of the seminar and learn about the history of the Islands, the people

and their struggles. I want to use my personal experiences as a guide to my studies into the world of colorism and how it has touched our lives and influenced our relationships. Through this unit, I hope that I can distinguish European influence and ideas from Native and Afro Latino ideas. This in turn will allow students to establish a more authentic identity. I think it is important for students to realize that they have the power to decide their own future because generations before them fought to be free and to pass that legacy to them.

Content Objectives:

In my current curriculum we use the book *The Skin I'm In*, by Sharon G. Flake. It is a realistic fiction book that fits into Unit one with the focus on self-identification. The main topics are bullying, discrimination, poverty, grief, and colorism. The common thread that binds the topics together stems from colorism and the characters not understanding their history as it relates to slavery.

In the novel, the main character Maleeka creates fictional diary entries of an enslaved girl named Akeelma. Akeelma is traveling to America on a slave ship. On that voyage, Akeelma suffers atrocities and abuse. Throughout the novel Maleeka is ridiculed for choosing to create a slave girl. The other students do not realize that she is describing their collective history. They feel a disconnect and Maleeka feels an affinity to the character she created. As an ice breaker, I would ask the students to tell me what does bullying look like, sound like, and feel like. I would do that with the subsequent vocabulary words (discrimination, poverty, grief, and colorism). I would post this information around the room, allowing the students to add information as we move along in the unit. Subsequently, my first objective and starting point would be to ask the students "who are you?" They will be able to express who they are through visual aids, graphic organizers, and personal cultural content. This activity will serve as a sort of "pre" idea, concept and knowledge point. More than focus on defining the words as simple vocabulary they will revisit the words and their connotation. I will incorporate different genres of reading material that define and describe each topic as we see it in the world today. Students will acquire new vocabulary and be able to recognize, analyze and react critically to these articles in relation to themselves, the world and implicit or explicit colorism.

Once we are done exploring the topics and concepts aforementioned, another objective for my unit will be to ask the big question, "Where does colorism come from?" "What is our history as a people?" "Where do our similarities lie and what makes us different?" I chose to address these concepts in this order because I think once we know who we are and why we have preconceived notions, we can see where it comes from and begin to change the narrative. During this time students will be able to dive into excerpts of non-fiction works of literature and articles that explore the history of slavery and "freedom" with a lens on the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Students can begin to see the link between slavery, dominance, "white privilege", socio-economics, and oppression in regards to colorism. In the Unit novel, *The Skin I'm In*, the main character Maleeka Madison embarks on a project and creates a fictional diary of a slave girl coming over from Africa. This is important and will serve as a way to bridge slavery in the Caribbean with slavery in the United States but more in regards to the treatment of human life and oppression based on color because even though slavery is slavery, the historical information is slightly different as to why slavery exists in these two societies. We will examine the social aspect and the formation of community structures within the slave communities. These unifications to progress and form communities did not sit well with white European-descended Hacienda owners, because they knew there was power in numbers. The Europeans could not fathom sharing a space with a black man.

Students will be able to read about and understand that many people of color come from generations of resilient people who wanted freedom first and foremost. When we read about and study the history and struggles of the Dominican Republic and its many conquerors, students will be able to identify how ideologies came into existence and then how they morphed over time to become modern day racism and discrimination. In the case of Puerto Rico, because it is not a free nation, students will be able to compare and contrast the colorism and racism between the two Islands. Students will then be able to determine if being a territory of the United States has any impact on colorism or is it an engrained ideology based on history and the influence of slavery.

By the end of this unit study, students will be able to read, analyze, discuss, and formulate written responses to critical concepts explored in a fictional piece of text bridging it with non-fiction text and literature. Students will be able to use critical information in regards to the history of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic as a starting point when identifying the characteristics of a society and its practice of colorism. Some enduring understandings I would like the students to walk away with are:

As an individual, we can we do something about changing the narrative of modern-day colorism.

We can teach others our history and in turn promote courageous conversations in regards to racism and colorism.

We can be the source of knowledge in regards to reading materials that can further someone else's learning about our history that still affects us today.

We as citizens of the world are agents of change because we are armed with the knowledge necessary to understand where we come from and where we need to go to promote equity and unity amongst all "colors".

Teaching Strategies:

In order to teach my unit, activating schema is always important because I need a base to begin my teaching. The overall unit question will be "Who am I and where do my ancestors come from?" "Why do I think the way I do?" I will start with anticipation guides and essential questions that the students will read and copy but not necessarily answer right away. They will copy then in a journal and answer later once they have read and researched the topics as a class. Some essential questions I will include are:

- What is the history of colorism? What is the history in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic?
- What is the difference between intraracial and interracial colorism?
- How might colorism be different in racially diverse locations versus racially homogeneous locations?
- What role did colorism play in the religious, political, and judicial systems?
- Can colorism impact socioeconomics, income, status, and wealth?
- "Y tu abuela, adonde está?" "And your grandmother? Where is she?"

The use of the Cornell note template is always beneficial when reading and annotating nonfiction texts. Students will formulate questions that they will answer after reading specific articles and literature. The information recorded on the note sheet can then be used to answer discussion questions and prepare for oral reports on findings in a think pair share. The other advantage of using the Cornell note template is that

students practice the art of summarizing. Students tend to write more but include less relevant information. The summary sections help students maintain a focus and choose information that is relevant. Students can use sentence starters from the Depth of Knowledge rubric to formulate questions and answer them after watching videos from a pre-screened list. This facilitates the access to knowledge for struggling readers.

Graphic organizers will work well throughout the unit. The graphic organizers are useful because they drive the students to really interact with the readings thus helping them to recall important information for future use. When presenting new concepts or vocabulary the KWL (**K**now-**W**ant to know- **L**earned) chart is effective. Students are allowed to gauge a concept or vocabulary at their own pace. Once completed the students can pair up based on what they want to learn and share amongst each other what they already know. This also fosters focused classroom discussion which students do not get enough of. Especially with this unit, discussions are important because it offers us the opportunity to teach perspective and then relate it back to author's perspective and author's choice, another focus in the New Haven curriculum. When utilizing fictional literature, story maps are best because it offers the students a template to note take and summarize their readings for future use. Story maps make it easier for students to read and keep track of what they are reading. It also serves as a good study guide. When cross genre readings are assigned, Venn diagrams are useful because it gives students the opportunity to compare and contrast which is the basis for further writing assignments.

Technology in this day and age cannot be left out when teaching any unit, especially one so socially charged and relevant today. There are a plethora of documentaries both current and historical that talk about colorism. The documentaries will be viewed as whole group and reading response questions provided. Students will be allowed to view, reflect, respond, and share out. Directing critical thinking into oral expression is important at this stage in their educational journey. For struggling students, it is always helpful to give them templates and sentence starters. Because of the use of technology, lessons can be differentiated to facilitate and accommodate different learning styles.

As the facilitator, I will provide the opportunity for a class debate. It will be more of an informal debate style. It will be the vehicle by which students can express their difference of opinion and substantiate it. During the unit we will more than likely discuss topics that our students may not agree upon. Students when given the opportunity are natural born debaters and want to express their opinions. This will allow students the opportunity to formulate responses and learn how to defend those responses and opinions with researched facts. Debates cover various disciplines required by the curriculum and the Common Core Standards.

As a culminating activity, students will revisit the question of who they are and why they think the way they do. They will create an expository essay where they will express who they were at the beginning of the unit and who have become in regards to self-identity, colorism and societal impositions. They will write about the effects of slavery and colorism in today's world and how they plan on changing the narrative for future generations or at least in their family starting one person at a time. The essay prompt will be individualized because of the diverse student population I serve. In order to facilitate the writing process, it will be done in stages. We will do the pre-write, rough draft, revisions, and publication. Students will be paired off by ability levels so they can work at their own pace and no one student needs to wait for the other.

Classroom activities:

Before beginning the lessons on colorism, the definition and difference between racism and colorism has to be explicitly taught. Racism is not colorism.

Lesson One: Exploration of the historical elements of Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and the United States in regards to the end of slavery and the role of blacks in these countries.

Activity one: Students will work on a KWL chart about the history of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

Once students have been given the opportunity to process the prompts and write down their own answers in regards to what they know, they will then be able to peer share and complete the section in regards to what they want to know. Historical pictures will be posted as stimuli so that they can create question in regards to what they want to know based on what they are seeing. (Puerto Rico pictures between 1873-1920) (Dominican Republic between 1780-1920) The pictures are helpful because they offer a focused starting point for students who may have no prior knowledge at all. The pictures will be geared towards plantation life and social distinctions.

Activity two: This second activity will help to further activate questioning and offer research topics. This will also serve as a source of information that may help students answer the questions they generated earlier. Students will view two historical videos, one of Puerto Rico and the other of the Dominican Republic. They will annotate on a graphic organizer the facts they are learning. The videos can be paused along the way to allow processing time for students as they annotate and revisit previous graphic organizers. This will then serve as a reference sheet to complete the KWL chart.

Activity three: Students will then view a historical video about slavery/plantation life in the United States and annotate the observations and facts gathered in this video. Once the viewings and subsequent discussions are complete, the students will gather their notes and begin to color coordinate and categorize subtopics and or commonalities found in each video. Some suggested categories are family life, working conditions, worker/overseer, dress, physical stance, and race/color/ethnicity.

Activity four: After classroom discussions, peer sharing and questioning students will complete a tri-Venn diagram with their findings. This will provide them with a solid historical background of all three countries and a focus on similarities of the three countries.

Suggested images and videos for lesson one and further studies:

Puerto Rico: 1873-1920: Uncle Sam teaching his countries. - stock illustration: Illustration from 19th century: Getty Images.

A Cock Fight, Puerto Rico 1909: Getty Images.

“The School of Master Rafael Cordero” (circa 1890) an oil by Francisco Oller: Credit Ateneo Puertorriqueno, San Juan, PR

Puerto Rican Planter with House Slave, ca. 1808: Walker, John A.

Video: <https://youtu.be/GMpygYG1rQ4> Afro Puerto Rico: The African Diaspora in Puerto Rico

Dominican Republic: 1780-1920

Dominican Republic, 1871: Group of natives around a well in Samana City: Taylor, James, A.

Free Women of Color with their Children and Servants in a Landscape, Agostino Brunias. (n.d. ca 1780)
Source: Wikipedia

Dominican Republic, 1871: burial ceremony in the Capilla del Rosario-a remnant of the city of Nueva Isabella, opposite Santo Domingo City: Author unknown

Atrocities of the Spaniards on Santo Domingo, published 1876 ; Darley, Felix

Hazard, Samuel, *Santo Domingo; with a glance at Hayti* (1873). Google Books.

Video: <https://youtu.be/9ZYSOvITm3A> Afro Dominican Republic: The African Diaspora in the Dominican Republic

United States: Video: <https://youtu.be/eFwG7jAeyrU> Enslavement to Emancipation.

Lesson two: A map study to locate geographic relationships and the slave trade route.

Activity one: Journal write: How far do you think these counties are from each other? (United States, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic) Can you locate them on a map? How did the slaves come here from Africa? How long do you think the journey lasted?

Activity two: Individual period maps will be given to each student where specific areas will be labeled. Students will be given the opportunity to examine, draw, or trace the maps provided. They will analyze and discuss the slave trade route. Thought provoking questions to stimulate conversation will be provided. Why is the slave trade route triangular in nature? What is the significance that the traders headed out from European ports? Who was manning these ships? Based on the diagram of the interior of a slave ship found in the novel *The Skin I'm In* what was this voyage like for the slave from Africa?

Lesson three: Colorism: What is it and where does it come from?

Activity one: Journal write: Once slavery ends, what relationship do you think the Europeans have with the freed slaves? How much of the relationship do you think is based on skin color and socio economics? Why are people of color the largest part of the workforce?

Activity two: Cornell Notes: The topic for the Cornell notes is colorism and the objective is to define the term and provide concrete example of what it looks like. The essential question will be: What is colorism and what does it look like amongst Puerto Ricans and Dominicans? The students will formulate questions based on the topic, objective, and essential question. They will then complete the note section based on research. Once they are done with the notes they will culminate with the summary.

Activity three: Writing of an expository essay. Students will first google pictures of Sammy Sosa and then proceed to write a 3-4 paragraph expository essay utilizing the following prompt: Research and history have demonstrated that there is colorism and racism in the Caribbean. One modern day example of how colorism

affects an individual is the case of Sammy Sosa. He is a retired Dominican baseball player. Over the years he has admittedly bleached his skin and as a consequence is much lighter. After analyzing your research, do you think that colorism in the Dominican Republic played a role in Sammy Sosa's decision to become lighter? Use evidence and research based facts to support your essay.

Suggested articles and videos for lesson three and further studies:

Hatzipanagos, Rachel: Latinos have many skin tones. Colorism means they're treated differently. The Washington Post March 31, 2022

Video: <https://youtu.be/0fcwfKk3c3M>: Open BxRx Tuesday Anti-Black Racism and Colorism in the Dominican Community

Lesson four: Colorism in the United States today.

Activity one: Gallery walk with prompting questions displayed on the walls of the classroom. Students will be in groups of 4 and travel as a group. Each group will have a different color marker. They will go around the room clockwise and answer the following questions: Do we see colorism in the United States among blacks and or African Americans? Where? What does it sound like? What does it look like? Have you ever experienced colorism? Did you know you were experiencing colorism or now after learning about it you recognize that is what it was? Students will respond to the prompts and engage in a peer share opportunity while they are answering them. The class will then regroup and we will share the findings and how each group responded. Students will have the opportunity to ask other groups questions thus enhancing and promoting whole group conversation.

Activity two: Students will view one video and read one article about colorism in the United States. They will have a graphic organizer that will allow them to record up to 5 concrete facts for each (total of 10). The videos below are suggested, there are many others.

Video: <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Style/video/people-color-discuss-impact-colorism-71914978>

Article: <https://time.com/4512430/colorism-in-america/>

Activity three: Once the students have completed activity two, they will reflect on the following questions: The students will do independent research of the questions to find articles or videos that help them answer the questions. They will answer the questions in RACE (restate, answer, cite, explain) format:

What role does media play in perpetuating colorism?

How does colorism impact relationships? (familiar, romantic, friendships)

What impact does colorism have on education?

How does gender intersect with colorism?

Students will then view the following video: <https://youtu.be/P4wxh9Bjsmc> It is a video that depicts women in media talking about suffering the effects of colorism. Students will then revisit the questions and add to what they answered already with new perspective and learning.

Activity four: It is important for students to react to a quote. They have gathered enough schema to formulate an informed opinion and or reaction. They will continue on to the following quote. Reflect on the quotes meaning, a reaction to it, and its connection to the themes and topics in this unit. They will then go on to relate the quote to the character Maleeka in *The Skin I'm In*.

"I found the Negro, and always the blackest Negro, being made the butt of all jokes, particularly black women. ... "If it was so honorable and glorious to be black, why was it the yellow-skinned people among us had so much prestige? Even a child in the first grade could see that this was so from what happened in the classroom and on school programs. The light-skinned children were always the angels, fairies and queens of school plays. The lighter the girl, the more money and prestige she was apt to marry. So on into high school years, I was asking myself questions." -Zora Neale Hurston, "My People! My People!" in *Dust Tracks on a Road*, 1942

Activity five: As a culminating activity students will work in pairs and generate two lists. The graphic organizer will have two columns. They will generate a list of 10 negative statements that display colorism. In response to the negative comment, the students will need to generate a positive comment that negates the negative one. This activity will help foster the student's ability to recognize colorism and move towards a positive change that will help change a historically and socially perpetuated rhetoric.

Additional Activity: As a way to foster a positive self-image, students can participate in the following project. Take a small brown paper bag (lunch bags). On one side draw a self-portrait. Students should base the project on how they feel about themselves upon the completion of the unit. Self-awareness is key to this activity.

The students can decorate it any way they would like but should be encouraged to try to draw themselves, or how they see themselves as accurate as possible. Inside the bag, they should include 3-4 items that represent them or what is in their heart or mind. Once everyone is done, an "Inside-Outside" circle should be implemented so all students get the opportunity to share their work.

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Student Reading List

Sharon G. Flake "The Skin I'm In"

Suggested student reading list: Books on Colorism.

Esmeralda Santiago "When I was Puerto Rican"

Delores Phillips "The Darkest Child"

Judy Scales Trent "Notes of a 'white' black woman"

Cedric Herring "Skin Deep"

Marita Golden "Don't play in the Sun"

Wallace Thurman "The Blacker the Berry"

Materials for Classroom Use

- Computers
- Student Journals
- Cornell Note Template
- Tri-Venn Diagram
- Pre-Writing Graphic Organizer
- KWL Chart
- Chart Paper
- Categorizing Graphic Organizer
- Maps
- Map Templates.
- Colored Pencils
- Highlighters
- List of Sentence Starters
- List of Meaningful Dialogue Prompts

Appendix on Implementing District Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. Students will use the anchor curriculum text to explicitly show examples of concepts discussed in the unit.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. Students will use all information gathered on the various forms of graphic organizers completed from different sources in order to complete discussion questions, class discussions, and oral presentations.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9

Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topic. Students will use realistic fiction and nonfiction works to identify the themes and discuss how those themes are presented and how they relate.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2

Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. Students will apply this standard when working with the Cornell Notes.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3 Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). Students will identify the idea of colorism and provide evidence to support their finding.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. Students will be required to write an expository essay where they must apply what they have learned throughout the unit.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.D Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. Students will be required to use terms and new vocabulary acquired in their writing in order to explain the topic of their writing.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. Students will engage in the writing process when working on the essay assigned. The essay preparation is heavily reliant on peer editing and revising. Instructor input is given at different stages.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. Students will be afforded the opportunity to participate in class discussions where they will be required to be active participants.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.B Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. Discussion ground rules will be created by the students and they will post them

and hold each other accountable for following established protocol.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Students will practice this standard through informal debates, specifically in the rebuttal.

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