



Literature and the Special Education Student: A Multi-Media Approach

Curriculum Unit 85.03.02

by Barbara Banquer and Amy Aledort

Our unit has grown out of the need to address several factors that make high school special education students unique. The majority of the students in the self-contained program at Hillhouse High School are diagnosed as being "E.M.R.", or Educably Mentally Retarded. For the most part they move as a group, receiving instruction in English, math, social studies and science from special education teachers. Occasionally a student will be "mainstreamed" into a class and receive instruction with regular students if academic, social and behavioral skills warrant such placement. Classes such as gym, art and home economics are taken with regular class students.

It doesn't take long into the school year or take much insight or sophistication to realize that these students are different. They are aware of it; other students are aware of it. It is not unusual for a student to walk by my room and feign ignorance by asking, "Is this a yak-yak class?" "Yak-yak" was a term that I had never encountered in elementary or middle school. It seems to have replaced "retard."

Thus the special education student often sees himself or herself as being retarded, slow, odd, "out of it," and so on. Some students insist that the classroom door be closed, others sit by the inside wall so as not to be seen from passerbys in the hallway.

The special education classroom setting is even further complicated by the variations in type and degree of disabilities. Some students manage to read on a third grade reading level, the independent reading level would be even lower. Some students cannot read at all. The only shared characteristic is the inability to function successfully in the regular classroom. Additionally, their handicaps go beyond academic problems. Their judgment, social awareness, social interactions and general information of their environment may be impaired. They may be unable to see how events or data are connected, and need direct instruction on how things in their world relate. As stated by

John Severi, an English teacher at Hillhouse, "I need to establish in the classroom some sense of one activity naturally following another. I need to reinforce the idea that what we do today is a result of what we did yesterday and effects what we will do tomorrow." ¹ The students may have a short attention span, be easily distracted and/or hyperactive. Finally, students from the Hearing Impaired Program may receive some instruction in special education classes as well. They, too, have difficulty in regular classes, because of the hearing problem and because of accompanying learning disabilities and/or emotional problems.

Most of us are aware of the self-doubt and confusion that teen-aged people experience. Compound that with a poor self-image, an awareness of one's short-comings, an inability to read, write, or express oneself clearly, a failure to look, dress, or talk like everyone else, an inability to tell time or use money, take a test or compete athletically, and a sad, often false picture emerges. It is a false picture, or at least a distorted one, because many of these students have been misdiagnosed, misplaced, and therefore go without the kind of instruction that at an earlier age would have made their disabilities less severe and would have improved their levels of functioning.

Our students are nearing adulthood and independence. They are surrounded by all the social pressures of adolescence. They are not well-informed on issues relating to health, career choices, family planning, and sexuality and its inherent responsibility. Because they often lack the skills needed to assimilate information from society and the environment, they have difficulty making informed decisions and are not aware of their possible choices around work, marriage, and child-bearing. Their school experience has left them with a poor self-image, and their families and neighborhoods may provide few positive role models or choices of roles. It is important to talk directly about feelings, emotions, relationships, needs and responsibilities.

One of our goals is to provide as sophisticated and age-appropriate curriculum as possible. As teachers who wish to use literature—for its own value, experience, exposure, and as a vehicle to explore human growth and behavior—we needed to find a way to teach fiction (short stories, plays, poetry, novels) that will neither frustrate nor intimidate our students.

The teacher's love and interest in the material being taught has a tremendous effect on the degree of motivation shown by the students. This unit is an outgrowth of our own love of Twentieth Century American authors, taken in tandem with our knowledge of the complex and varied problems of our students.

Theories for teaching any subject matter to special education students usually encompass multi-sensory stimulation. Often such techniques are referred to as VAK, meaning the use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes. Our approach to teaching literature to severely disabled and inexperienced readers requires presenting the material in written, visual, and auditory modalities.

The following is a proposed sequence of steps for working with a particular piece of literature. We realize that this sequence could vary according to the class, material, and the teacher's personal style:

- 1) Story summary, lesson introduction, vocabulary enrichment
- 2) Brief history of the author, when appropriate
- 3) Film presentation and discussion
- 4) Reading of a selected portion of the work and questions for discussion
- 5) Dramatization, role playing or writing activity
- 6) Additional reading selection that repeats or interweaves with the original theme
- 7) Second viewing of film, if desired

We find that the showing of films is highly received by our students. The second viewing could be behaviorally rewarding as well as educationally sound. It would give the students an opportunity to re-focus, to pick up conversation or action that was previously missed or misinterpreted, and thus could be an appropriate ending activity.

The Public Broadcasting System has produced a series entitled "The American Short Story", and includes brief biographies of the authors it includes. We have created a curriculum unit around three of the films: "Almost A Man", by Richard Wright, "The Sky Is Grey", by Ernest Gaines, and "Soldier's Story" by Ernest Hemingway. These films can be borrowed from the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute for classroom use. The films serve as the foundation of the unit, around which other films, readings, and special activities are interwoven.

The structure of this unit can be applied to other units that a teacher might want to develop, using supplementary multi-media materials. (See Appendix A for suggestions and available materials).

The unit will be introduced mid-year, after building a rapport with the students. A very explicit explanation of the theme, "Becoming an Adult", the materials to be used (films and their written counterparts), and an outline of the sequence of activities will be presented. Each student will be given a folder to keep the outline, and can refer to it regularly, as well as to have an organized place for handouts, worksheets, and original written work.

The opening activity for the unit would be the following:

Ask the class, "What is the difference between a boy and a man?" Write the students' responses on the board. For example:

<i>Boy</i>	<i>Man</i>
goes to school	works at a job
young	older
lives with his family	lives alone or supports a family

Repeat this procedure for a *girl* and a *woman* then a *child* and an *adult*. How are the lists alike? How are they different? Where do they overlap? Does sex make a difference, or is the major difference one of age? What are the good aspects of being a child? The bad? What are the good and bad aspects of being an adult? As high school students where do you fit in? Is there such a thing as an in-between? What kinds of things do young people have to do to be considered adults?

The next day's lesson would concern itself with the viewing of the film version of Ernest Gaines' short story "The Sky Is Grey". A brief introduction of the story and the characters, and of Gaines, could be presented orally, listing the title and characters on the board, or could be presented in written form for the students to refer to. The students would be told that they should look for incidents in the story that show how the boy, James, was learning to become a "man". Viewing would take all of that day's lesson.

As part of the next lesson the following question would be presented to the students: "What are some of the things that James did that were teaching him about becoming a man?" How is James being initiated into manhood? Responses could be written on the board, and the questions that follow could be used for discussion. It would be up to the teacher to decide if answers were to be written or oral, or to be developed as a group.

The *Questions for Discussion* were designed to take more than one lesson. After asking a particular question the teacher could have the students turn to a passage that illustrates the point at hand. Students would be instructed to turn to their copies of the story and follow along while the teacher reads aloud. With higher functioning classes the approach could vary. A student could be instructed to find the passage that answers the question, with the page number provided. Some classes could be assigned the story to read independently, then could take turns reading parts of the story aloud. A list of questions could be distributed beforehand, and the teacher could decide if students would be responsible individually or as a group in answering them. Individual writer's lives could be researched and other works by them could be read.

For our purposes, page numbers and the first line of the passage to be read will be noted following some of the questions. Obviously, page numbers will be different in editions other than the ones that we have used. The editions that we used are listed in the bibliography.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why did Mama think it was important for James to do the following things: kill the bird that he trapped, keep his collar down, work for the food that the store keeper offered to them?
2. Would James' life have been different if his father hadn't gone into the Army?
3. What do the preacher and the student in the dentist's office argue about? (Part 7, page 95-97, "We should question and question . . . it is not us who are mad").
4. Would you side with the preacher or the student? Why? Is it correct for youth to question adults? Was the student disrespectful?
5. What do you think of the way the people in the dentist's office were treated? (Part 9, page 102, "The nurse comes in the room . . . but we the wrong color.")
6. What about the white store keeper who fed James and Mama? Why did she befriend them? How did she do it so as not to hurt their pride? Do you think she was unusual? (Part 13, page 112-117, "soon's we turn the corner . . . end of story").
7. James didn't want to kill the bird for food, but he understood why it was necessary. What would you have done if you were James? Do you know of any situations when a boy or girl needed to take on the responsibilities of an adult? (Perhaps caring for a baby or younger sibling, looking after a grandparent, being responsible for preparing meals, working at an early age).
8. Have you ever been faced with the kind of problem or dilemma James faced in killing the bird? Have you been asked to do something that is usually done by an adult? Were you annoyed or pleased? (the teacher and/or students may prefer to keep personal experiences private. Responses could be written and the teacher could later read them to the class without disclosing the writer's names).

The next reading selection would be from John Wideman's *Brothers and Keepers*, the true story of John and his brother, Robby. John is a Rhodes Scholar, college professor, and novelist; his younger brother is serving a life sentence for murder. A brief introduction to the book and family members would be presented. The photograph on the back cover would be shared with the class.

The selection to be read is a memory of Robby's as he tells it to John. It is the opening selection of the book (page 3).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. When you were younger did a quarter seem like a lot of money?
2. What would it be like if you could buy a car for a quarter?
3. Robby says, "Now this was a kind of wish, but more than that it was a way of looking at things—an unrealistic way—It's like I wanted things to be easy . . ." Do you ever feel that way? Was Robby wrong for wanting things to be "easy"? ²
4. Compare Robby to James, the boy in "The Sky is Grey".
5. Are you more like Robby or James? Are you somewhere in-between?

Writing Assignment:

Kenneth Koch's book, *Wishes, Lies and Dreams*, describes his experiences teaching poetry-writing to young children in New York City Public Schools. Rather than ask our students to write poetry, we would adapt Koch's ideas and ask students to write about their thoughts and feelings. The Wideman selection offers these two possibilities:

1. I Used To/But Now—"The difference between the way they are now and the way they used to be . . . The suggestion to begin every odd line with 'I used to' and every even line with 'but now' seemed to help everybody think about past and present in a free and easy way." ³
2. Wishes—"To help them with form I suggested that they begin every line with 'I wish' and to make them feel free about what they said, I suggested that they make their wishes as wild and crazy as they liked. ⁴

The second film in the "American Short Story" series that we have chosen is Richard Wright's "Almos' A Man". After introducing Wright, the film would be viewed. The following lesson could be for reading the story aloud with the class, and discussion may need to be held over for the next time that the class meets.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How does Dave act like a boy? How does he act like a man?
2. Is Dave treated like a boy or a man? (Page 91, "Your ma letting you have your own money now?" "Shucks, Mistah Joe, Ahm gittin t be a man like anybody else.")
3. Why does Dave want a gun? Does he keep his promise to his mother? Why or why not?
4. What does Dave learn about shooting a gun?
5. Does he accept responsibility for shooting Jenny, the mule? What does he do? What would you have done if you were Dave?
6. James, in "The Sky is Grey", is given the responsibility for killing the bird that he trapped. How is that different from Dave having killed the mule?
7. Why does Dave leave home? What do you think will happen to him? Will he return home?

In Richard Wright's autobiography *Black Boy*, he describes the killing of another animal, a kitten, done by Richard as a young boy. With these two selections by Wright there is the opportunity to compare an author's autobiography with his fiction. Can a connection be made between an author's life and his work? When is a novel autobiographical? (See Appendix A for other examples).

We would begin this reading selection with the description of the family's tenement home in Memphis and Richard's impression of his father (pages 16-20).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Compare the killing of Jenny, the mule, with the killing of the kitten. How are the two situations alike? How are they different?
2. Compare Richard and Dave. Does either boy have a motive for his action? What does Richard do that shows that he accepts responsibility for killing the kitten? How is Dave different from Richard?
3. Dave's triumph could be in learning to fire the gun and in leaving home, "away somewhere, somewhere, where he could be a man . . .".⁵ Richard says, "I had my first triumph over my father. I made him believe that I had taken his words literally. I had made him know that I felt he was cruel . . .".⁶ Do you think that Richard had good reasons for acting out against his father? Compare Dave's parents to Richard's. How do you feel about the way that these parents acted toward their sons? How are they different from Mama's treatment of James in "The Sky is Grey"?

The third P.B.S. "American Short Story" film to be discussed is based on Ernest Hemingway's short story

“Soldier’s Home”. An introduction to Hemingway’s career as a writer and his experiences in World War I and The Spanish Civil War could serve as a background to the story. Have the students view the movie and read it aloud. The questions follow.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How would you describe Krebs? Describe his relationship with his family.
2. How did things change for Krebs after his return from the war? (Page 146, “Before Krebs went away . . . it was still the same” and page 149, “One morning . . . Krebs sat up in bed.”).
3. Why were his parents worried about him?
4. How were his responsibilities as a soldier different from his life when he returns to his parents’ home?
5. Krebs’ father offers him a job. Why does he choose to leave home instead?
6. What do you think will happen to him?

Another way that boys often reach out for manhood, as well as for identity, is through the association with a neighborhood gang. “Papo”, a short story by New York author Carlyle Brown, *West Side Story* , by Leonard Bernstein, and selections from Edward Rivera’s *Family Installments* , address a number of themes and issues dealing with identity, family relations, and racism. “Papo” is writ; ten in a language that our students would find both comfortable and familiar.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Describe the events of the story. Who is Papo? What is his position in the gang?
2. How is Papo’s position in the gang different from his place at home?
3. How will the gang change after Papo’s death?
4. What happens to gang members as they get older?

West Side Story , by Leonard Bernstein is based on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* . A synopsis of that story as well as an introduction to the characters in *West Side Story* would be presented. After showing the ~film in at least three installments, discuss:

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is the basic conflict between the Jets and the Sharks? What are their reasons for disliking each other?
2. What is the attitude of Detective Shrank and Officer Krupke toward the Jets and the Sharks? How do the gangs act toward the police? Could you say that they team up against the police in order to protect their way of life? Give examples.
3. Why have these boys joined gangs? We would play the recording of the song "Officer Krupke" and distribute copies of the words.

Are the boys just being playful or is there some truth in what they are saying? Do you think that those reasons could apply today? Are there alternative ways of being accepted in a neighborhood?

4. Who or what is responsible for the deaths of the three boys, Riff, Bernardo, and Tony? Could anybody have prevented any of these murders?
5. One of the Jets said, "Gee, nobody was supposed to get killed . . . I wish it was yesterday." If they really could have done it over, would they have done things any differently?
6. Do you think that the Jets and Sharks will ever be able to get along? Do you think that they learned anything from the deaths of the three boys?
7. Can you think of any gang disputes that have occurred in your neighborhood or school? What was the cause of the dispute? Was the problem ever settled? If so, how?

Family Installments is Edward Rivera's account of his family's life in a small Puerto Rican village, their move to New York and his relationships and interactions with school, friends, neighborhood and church.

The language in *Family Installments* may be objectionable. The characters use racial slurs and curse words that the teacher and/or students may not feel comfortable using in class. The vocabulary is more sophisticated than what is found in the previous selections. However, we feel that there are many worthwhile issues that are relevant to adolescence, self-concept, racism, sexuality, and family relationships.

What follows is a synopsis of a few chapters that lend themselves to our unit.

In the chapter entitled "In Black Turf", Rivera describes his adventures with his friend, Panna. Panna was "small, undernourished, and about as black a Puerto Rican as I'd ever known . . . He had an immense head topped with an abundance of thick, unwashed, kinky hair and tiny rotting teeth. People sometimes took him for an American black . . ." ⁷ The chapter goes on to describe a confrontation between the two boys in which racial slurs are exchanged, and a subsequent face-off in Central Park when the boys venture into "black territory".

In the chapter called "Malanguez and Son", Santos decides to take a walk one night. He is stopped by the police and harassed. The chapter deals with the problems of being a minority adolescent and, like *West Side*

Story, the prejudice of the authorities. In the same chapter Santos' father has to deal with a similar situation. Both men must question their freedom and self-respect, and their innocence and physical safety are threatened.

Appendix A—Additional Materials

This is a list of additional selections of literature that could be used to develop lessons on adolescence, friendship, families, sexuality, self-concept, and racial issues. We have divided the list into three categories. In some cases the references fit into more than one category, and therefore may be repeated.

These are readings with corresponding films:

Hasberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun* . Random House, New York, 1969.

Kata, Elizabeth. *A Patch of Blue* . Popular Library, New York, 1961.

Plath, Sylvia. *The Bell Jar* . Harper and Row, New York, 1971.

Pomerance, Bernard. *The Elephant Man* . Grove Publishing, New York, 1979.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men* . Penguin Books, New York, 1937.

The following books of short stories, poems, novels, biographies, and autobiographies are resources that deal with the themes and issues cited above.

Carver, Raymond. "A Small, Good Thing", in *Cathedral* . Random House, New York, 1981.

Hughes, Langston. *The Langston Hughes Reader* . George Brazillien, Inc., New York, 1969.

Hughes, Langston. *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes* . Vintage Books, Random House, New York, 1974.

Hughes, Langston. *Something in Common and Other Short Stories* . Hill and Wang, New York, 1963.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Dust Tracks on a Road* . University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1984.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Spunk* . Turtle Island Foundation, Berkely, CA, 1985.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* . University of Illinois Press,-Urbana, 1978.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Warrior Woman: Memoir of a Girl Among Ghosts* . Random House, Inc., New York 1975.

McCarthy, Mary. *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* . Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1946.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple* . Simon and Schuster Inc., New York, 1982.

Walker, Alice. *In Love and Trouble* . Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, 1967..

Walker, Alice. *Meridian* . Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1976.

Walker, Alice. *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* . Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, 1970.

Walker, Alice. *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1971.

Wideman, John. *Damballah* . Avon Books, New York, 1981.

The following is a list of autobiographies, essays, novels, and short stories that are grouped by author. They could be used with higher functioning classes if the teacher wanted to explore the connection between writers and their work.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Dust Tracks on a Road* . University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1984. (Autobiography)

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* . University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1978. (Novel)

Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* . Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, 1983. (Essays)

Walker, Alice. *Meridian* . Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1976. (Novel)

Wideman, John. *Brothers and Keepers* . Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1984. (Biography)

Wideman, John. *Damballah* . Avon Books, New York, 1981. (Novel)

Wright, Richard. *Black Boy* . Harper and Row, New York, 1937. (Autobiography)

Wright Richard. "Almos' A Man" in *The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers* , ed. Langston Hughes, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1967. (Short story)

Appendix B—Outline for Students

I. Opening Activity

- A. Compare and contrast *boy* and *man*
- B. Compare and contrast *girl* and *woman*
- C. Compare and contrast *child* and *adult*
- D. Look for similarities and differences in lists

II. "The Sky is Grey" by Ernest Gaines

- A. Introduction to story and author
- B. Watch the film, *The Sky is Grey*
- C. Discuss: What are some of the things that James did that were teaching him about manhood?
- D. Questions for Discussion / Reading

III. *Brothers and Keepers* by John Wideman

- A. Introduction to book and author
- B. Read: Robby's memory of being a young child
- C. Questions for Discussion

- IV. Writing Assignment
 - A. I Used To/But Now
 - B. I Wish
- V. "Almos' A Man" by Richard Wright
 - A. Introduction to story and author
 - B. Watch the film, *Almos' A Man*
 - C. Read story / Questions for Discussion
- VI. *Black Boy* by Richard Wright
 - A. Read short selection
 - B. Questions for Discussion
- VII. "Soldier's Home" by Ernest Hemingway
 - A. Introduction to story and author
 - B. Watch the film, *Soldier's Home*
 - C. Read story / Questions for Discussion
- VIII. "Papo" by Carlyle Brown
 - A. Introduction to story and author
 - B. Read story
 - C. Questions for Discussion
- IX. *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein
 - A. Introduction to story and author; influence of *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
 - B. Watch the film, *West Side Story* (three days)
 - C. Questions for Discussion / Reading
- X. *Family Installments* by Edward Rivera
 - A. Introduction to story and author
 - B. Suggested chapters, with summaries, for further discussion

Appendix C—Optional Activities

I. *Photographic Self-Portrait* :

Make a collection of photographs of yourself. Ask your mother or father for each of the following:

1. a photograph of yourself as a baby
2. a photograph of yourself as a young child (aged five to ten)
3. a current photograph

What do you remember about yourself after seeing each picture? How have you changed? Make a chart like the one below and compare your pictures:

First picture

Second Now

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What do you think your picture will look like five years from now? What will it look like ten years in the future? What will you be doing—working, going to school, raising a family?

II. *Person at Time Line*:

*We suggest that this activity be demonstrated and developed with the class as a group, using the chalkboard, before asking students to do it on their own.

On an unlined piece of paper draw a line like the one here. (The teacher could provide a mimeographed copy).

* _____ *

1. Fill in the year you were born.
2. Fill in your earliest memory. How old were you? (Some suggestions: the birth of a sibling, an accident, a death, a move from one part of the country to another).
3. Fill in the year you started school. Is there anything special that you remember?
4. What other important events do you remember? Meeting a special friend, learning something new and difficult, a first love?
5. Where are you now on your time line?
6. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
7. What might you be doing in ten years? twenty?

III. *Making Choices — A Values Clarification Exercise* :

Every day we make choices. What will you wear to school today? What will you have for breakfast? Who will you sit with at lunch? What will you do after school?

As we get older we are usually expected to make more choices, and more significant ones. Will you finish school? Will you go to college? Will you get married? If you have children, how many? What kind of job will you choose? What is more important, having a car or your own apartment?

The following questions, from Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum's book, *Values Clarification*, asks students to rank choices in order of their preferences. Here are several examples that could be used. This activity could come as an introduction to a particular discussion, could be divided into small sections and be used as a homework assignment, could be used to conclude a

particular activity or discussion, or could be used as a quiet-time activity at the beginning or end of a class period. Students could also be encouraged to develop their own questions and list of choices of answers.

1. Where would you rather be on a Saturday afternoon?
 - at the beach
 - in the woods
 - in a discount store
2. Which would you most like to improve?
 - your looks
 - the way you use your time
 - your social life
3. How do you have the most fun?
 - alone
 - with a large group
 - with a few friends
4. If someone's parents were in constant conflict, which would be better for them to do?
 - get divorced, and the father leave home
 - stay together and hide their feelings for the sake of the children
 - get divorced, and the children live with their father
5. If you had two hours to spend with a friend, which would you do?
 - stand on a corner
 - go to a movie
 - go for a walk
 - go bowling
6. If you suddenly inherited money and became a millionaire, would you
 - share your wealth through charities, educational trust funds, etc.?
 - continue in your present job and activities
 - really live it up?
7. Which would be your job preference?
 - hard and dirty work at \$80 per week
 - clean and easy work at \$40 per week
 - dirty but easy work at \$60 per week
8. Which do you most want money for?
 - to buy your own food and clothing
 - to go places on your own
 - to feel independent
9. Which would you prefer?
 - a short, exciting life with a peaceful death
 - a long, dull life with a peaceful death
 - a long, exciting life with a painful death

10. In which of these situations would you be most likely to take some action?

- a car is parked with its headlights on in broad daylight
- a dog has scared a kitten up a telephone pole
- some big boys are trying to tie tin cans to the tail of a dog

Notes

1. John Severi, *Student Autobiography : An Approach Through Journal Writing*, in *Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute Curriculum Units* , 1982, Volume II (New Haven: Yale University, 1982), p. 105.
2. John Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1984), p. 3.
3. Kenneth Koch, *Wishes, Lies and Dreams* (New York: Vintage Books/Chelsea House Publishers, 1970), p. 174.
4. Ibid, p. 86.
5. Richard Wright, "Almos' A Man", in *The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers* , ed. Langston Hughes (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 103.
6. Richard Wright, *Black Boy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 18.
7. Edward Rivera, *Family Installments* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 147.

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