



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1987 Volume III: Writing About American Culture

The United States Constitution and Selected Amendments

Curriculum Unit 87.03.08
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The main purposes for organizing this curriculum unit is to instruct so that the students can learn, read, write essays, understand, recall the origin and history for writing the Constitution: Declaration of Independence: Bill of Rights and additional amendments in a simplified version. The students will be involved in the process of thinking, writing and rethinking. In Andrew N. Applebee's book, *Writing in the Secondary Schools: Literature and the Content Areas*, he notes that "students write for two purposes; they write to learn and learn to write" (p. 193). This is the reason why, during reading and language arts time, the students will read and write for two major purposes which will be included in this unit.

I am developing my own instructional packets. I will record the *texts* that are found further in this unit. The students will have the *texts/stories* in booklets, and they will read—along while the cassette tape(s) are playing. I have observed, during the past while teaching the students who are reluctant readers, that the students enjoy reading—along with booklets and cassette tapes that are commercial materials. Therefore, I am designing some materials and lesson plans, which will include comprehension and reference study skills, that will apply to my own selected subject matter, in this unit, and the commercial materials.

There will be 12-15 students who are in grade seven within a subgroup/class. They will have individual copies of the laminated booklets that have been designed by me. The cassette tapes will have continuous parts; each part will be presented twenty-minutes. The students will also use commercial paperback books and other materials in their subgroups. The materials are found and mentioned further in this unit. Students learn more when the instructor explains, exactly what the students are expected to learn, and demonstrates the steps needed to accomplish a particular academic task.

Intended Audience: These lessons are for Chapter I students in grade 7 and can be extended to average ability/adjusted students in grades 6-8. Thinking and Reference/Study Skills: These skills include topics such as decision making, creativity, research and writing. The Chapter I instructor will incorporate the activities into the classroom and homework assignments. The activities will improve the students' skills in reasoning, reading, writing, speaking and listening within the content field(s). The activities will be given to improve basic skills and social confidence. "Most compensatory students are really quite bright and should be challenged intellectually", cites Sydelle D. Ehrenberg: *Basic Building and Applying Strategies for Intellectual Competencies in Students* .

The Schedule of the Lessons

I will teach the curriculum unit to grade seven students. The unit will be taught on Wednesdays and Thursdays (40 minutes each day). The progress will be as follows:

I. Cultural Literacy in November: There will be displays of students' artwork, written assignments and homework in the classroom.

A. Pilgrims and the Mayflower Compact (Plymouth, Massachusetts: 1620)

B. Thomas Hooker and the Fundamental Orders (Hartford, Connecticut: 1638). The laws laid the foundation for the first Constitution of Connecticut and the first known Constitution of the world.

C. Connecticut: The First Constitution State.

II. Cultural Literacy in December: The students will study and do the requirements of *Texts A and B* that is further in the unit.

III. Cultural Literacy in January: The students will do requirements of *Texts C and D*: Ku Klux Klan: The Civil Rights Era: Observance of Martin Luther King, Jr's. Birthday which is further in the unit.

IV. Cultural Literacy in February;

(1) The students will complete the essay writing requirements "What the Constitution Means to Me and to Our Country."

(2) They will do the requirements of *Black History Month* and complete the *Selected Amendments/Civil Rights Era* .

V. Cultural Literacy: The Constitution and Selected Amendments: The students essays will be mailed to the "National Headquarters" on Tuesday, March 1, 1988. By May 2, 1988, the instructor will receive a response from the "National Reading Headquarters" about the students' essays.

VI. Cultural Literacy May-June: The essayists will receive recognition of awards in their classes, school and/or community, state, plus nationally.

The United States Department of Education has announced an exciting project designed to celebrate the *Bicentennial of the Constitution* and encourage students to write essays entitled "What the Constitution Means to Me and to Our Country" during the coming school year in the elementary, and junior high/middle school grades across the nation. The United States Department of Education has announced to the Education *Evaluation and Remedial Assistance* (EERA) facilitators/instructors, better known as the *Chapter I Program in the New England* region, that they are expected to give a group of students the opportunity to participate in the project. Several years ago, the federally funded program was called *Titles One and Seven*. During Mr. Reagan's administration, he merged the two "Basic Fundamentals of Teaching Programs" which are "Elementary and Secondary National Remedial Assistance Acts."

The Chapter One remedial reading program is a "Federally Funded Program". The program helps to monitor individual students' progress during the entire school year. The criterion, for remedial grouping, is to place the students in the reading program whose percentile ranks of the *Metropolitan Achievement Test* results are

below the twenty-third percentile. The second group of students who can be included in the reading program are those with the percentile ranks of thirty-third and below. This program is not to replace the development reading/language arts programs that are scheduled in the students' regular classrooms and with their classroom teachers. The reading assistance program allows the students to receive additional help in reading and enrichment activities. In other words, those students who qualify are to receive reading and language arts instruction in two types of reading programs: "the developmental reading program" which is taught by classroom educators; the additional "remedial reading program" is taught by supportive service, Chapter One, educators. Many of the "remedial reading" students, who are serviced in the Chapter One programs, are reluctant readers.

The meaning of reluctant readers will be explained further in this unit. The United States Department of Education staff expects the Chapter One staff members to use many instructional supplementary materials, to encourage and help the students to become a "Nation of Better Readers." I agree that it is highly imperative to use different teaching strategies and innovative ideas continually in the "Regular Education and Chapter One" reading curriculum. In *The Research Newsletter of the American Federation of Teachers*, there is an article that explains "reading, thinking and writing are crucial issues to the United States Public Schools, and it is important that the national guidelines of Chapter One programs be continually evaluated. Educators are to use what works to raise the achievement of American students to levels attained by students in other developed nations."

The grade seven students (24-28) who are in the independent group (further explained in unit) will be the target population. Each person will write an essay citing the importance, meaning and what the Constitution means to one's self and society. How does it help one's family, community and/or Country, of the United States of America? This project is also supported by a large number of education associations and organizations across the nation. The "International Reading Association" has a theme "Promoting A Nation of Better Readers". It is one of the many educational organizations which is sponsoring the project, but it is the only one specifically addressing the special needs and scarcity of materials to effectively teach this project. I will purchase and designate the materials with the use of money from a reading mini-grant; it has been awarded to implement the project. The students will use "Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)" paperback books. They will have instructional packets and materials designed by the author of this unit. The students will use many varieties of audio-visual equipment and software (teacher-made and commercial materials).

The grade seven essayists will be involved in completing the curriculum unit and handwritten essays (250-300 words). The instructor will send the essays to the "International Reading Headquarters" on Tuesday, March 1, 1988 to be judged. The holistic scoring process will be used to select 150 winners from the Eastern District and the *holistic scoring* process will be used to select the winners. The students will be rated 1-4, refer to *The Process of Writing*, Barbara Trader (p. 328).

1 = POOR 2 = FAIR 3 = GOOD 4 = EXCELLENT

The "basic goals" skills chart will be examined from four modified pedagogical perspectives (Shaughnessy: p. 275) in the classroom during instructional time.

There will be 30 prizes for first place winners (\$200 United States War Bonds); the first prize winners will go to Washington, D.C. for more awards and recognition. The students will appear in a 30 second, *The Constitution and Me*, "vignette". In Gabriele Rico's book *Writing the Natural Way*, she explains and illustrates "vignettes" (p. 127). The airing of the "vignette(s)" will coincide with the 200th Anniversary of the United States Constitution between April and July 4, 1988.

The 30 prizes for second place winners will be (\$100 United States War Bonds). There will be 30 prizes for third place winners (\$50 United States War Bonds). The 60 fourth prize winners will receive small trophies. All of the essayists will receive certificates from the "Reading Association Council", and the Chapter I instructors will present them to their students.

Reading: Thinking: Writing

It is a fact that we live in an American society of printed words. Reading is a basic tool of education, and it is one of the most important skills in our daily lives. People can acquire new ideas through reading. They can obtain needed information and broaden their interests. They can more fully enjoy watching television, go to the movies/theaters and the like. Many people, who live in more culturally developed countries, read hundreds and thousands of words daily. However, there are a large number of parents who are "reluctant readers"; there are also many school age children who are "reluctant readers."

Reluctant readers are adults and youths who hate reading; they may not look at or read a single book, newspaper, magazine and/or periodical. The adults who are "reluctant readers" will read their mail; they will read signs and phrases but will not necessarily, read materials that consist of complete sentences and paragraphs.

Students, whose reading tests results require them to enroll into the Chapter One program, are largely youngsters who dislike reading because of a poor start in developing elementary reading skills. In many cases, these students can learn that reading can be an exciting experience, and it does not have to be so painful/difficult when they receive additional assistance in the school reading program(s). They do not necessarily have to remain in a Chapter One program during the duration of their elementary and secondary school years. In the report, United States of Education for Title and Chapter *One Reading Statistics*, persons can read the information which has been monitored (p. 141).

The reluctant readers in grade seven will be given many opportunities in their lessons to utilize their knowledge. They will also be allowed succinctly to emphasize and compare the vast changes that have taken place in the New England region and our American society politically, economically, sociologically and environmentally during the second semester (November-March). I hope that the students will benefit from the "text", curriculum unit and enhance the possibility of achieving higher " *Degrees of Reading Power* " when taking the " *City And State Mastery Tests* ."

The students will have opportunities in the lessons to investigate and utilize their knowledge; develop awareness; establish and expand their thinking abilities. The students will also have the opportunities to express and expand their imaginative thinking abilities more freely; recall and think reflectively upon personal and concrete experiences; collaborate and share information with their peers within the classroom while writing the essays "What the Constitution Means to Me and to Our Country". The students will begin writing the final draft on February 1, 1988 in the "Independent Writing Process" group. This group in November through February will do Phases 3 through 6 in Barbara Trader's curriculum unit, *Practical Writing in the Intermediate Grades* (pp. 320-323). The students will complete "Phase 6" no later than March 1, 1988. The essays will be mailed no later Than March 4, 1988.

Content and Knowledge

The students' prior knowledge of the topic(s) is very important before they begin writing essays about the topic(s). This is why an emphasis on content and comprehension will be addressed in this section of the

curriculum unit. Reading comprehension is much greater when the students acquire knowledge of the content, repertoire of reading, and the ability to control their own learning by reading “text(s)” (Appleseed: p. 205).

The *texts* , that one is about to read, have been simplified by the author of this unit. I have simplified the selections/texts, because the grade seven students will not have difficulty reading the information. These are the mini-texts that I have recorded on the cassette tapes. The printed selections have been laminated and formulated into booklets. Presently, there are fifteen booklets in a set. The teacher-made materials will be located in my classroom at Jackie Robinson Middle School.

The Text—An Overview Of Events. . .

Text A. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution

The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776; A famous lawmaker, Roger Sherman, from Connecticut had an important role in getting the Declaration of Independence signed. The United States’ independence from England was official, and the adoption of the important document was a major stepping-stone for this Country.

What were the articles of Confederation that the Rhode Island lawmakers wanted to preserve? A group of patriots wrote the *Articles of Confederation* during the year of 1781 that provided a plan for the government. The Congress consisted of representatives from all of the states; it was intended for Congress to become the central government. However, Congress had limited powers. The Americans had rebelled against Great Britain, because the king and lawmakers in each of the thirteen states behaved as though there were thirteen separate countries. Furthermore, Congress could pass laws but did not have the power to make people obey them.

In Philadelphia during May 25, 1787, there were 55 men/delegates who represented twelve of the thirteen original states. The Rhode Island lawmakers from the New England Region did not want the government under the *Articles of Confederation* changed. The decision was made that at least nine of the thirteen states had to ratify or approve the Constitution before it could become the law of the land. The delegates took copies of the Constitution to their state legislatures. It was not easy to get the Constitution ratified. Many powers had been taken from the states and given to the national government/federal government. Some of the lawmakers and delegates complained that certain rights, which they had demanded, were not clearly promised in the Constitution. The lawmakers, who favored the Constitution, wrote a series of articles defending the Constitution which made our nation free.

Subsequently, *thirty-nine of the fifty-five men* signed the Constitution at a meeting in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. Nine states, which included Connecticut, accepted the Constitution of the United States; it was employed as the law of our nation. Furthermore, three, of the thirty-nine, men who signed the Constitution were from the State of Connecticut.

Text B. Connecticut and the Convention

The three lawmakers from Connecticut who attended the *Constitutional Convention* in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787 were *Roger Sherman* , Oliver Ellsworth and William Samuel Johnson. What did these men do in Connecticut? *Roger Sherman* was an experienced and popular statesman; he had worked in legislation throughout the *War of Independence*. Ellsworth was the youngest of the three lawmakers; he was a renown lawyer and judge in the *State of Connecticut* . Johnson had been a delegate for the *Stamp Act Congress* which

convened in New York.

“Connecticut and the Famous Compromise”

The most important result of the Constitutional Convention was due to Connecticut. It was among the first to give an official approval of transferring power to the federal government.

Why were the three Connecticut men responsible for the “Connecticut Compromise” under which our Country is governed today? The three lawmakers helped to change an original proposal that dealt with the number of senators representing a state based on the number of people voting in the, particular state(s). The representation was changed to the House of Representatives; therefore, each state was to be represented by *two senators* regardless of its population. Later, *Roger Sherman* became the first Mayor of New Haven, Connecticut.

Text C. The Blacks in Connecticut and Massachusetts (1776-1784)

The few Blacks that lived in the Northern State of Connecticut were given the rights by the White lawmakers to form their separate segregated society and “government”. They were able to enjoy a certain lifestyle even though they weren’t allowed nationally to enlist in the American Army. Many of the Whites became fearful in Connecticut that the Black Americans might join the British Army, due to the fact, that the State of Virginia’s royal governor granted freedom for all Black slaves who were willing to join the British armed forces on November 7, 1775. The British military plans included using Blacks and Indians to fight colonists in frontier areas (“Declaration of Independence” as explained by Richard Morris. *The World Book Encyclopedia* . p.68 Xerox handout)

Subsequently, those Blacks who had fought in Boston, Massachusetts were permitted to reenlist first. The free Blacks and slaves (ministers’ house servants: farmers; skilled workers and medical specialists) had been recruited into armed service by 1778. The Blacks organized their army in 1781 which is known as the “Second Company of the Fourth Regiment.” There were a few Blacks who were not freed by not serving in the war(s); they were freed because of the Connecticut Emancipation Law in 1784 (*The World Book Encyclopedia*). It was an official process in which Black people earned wages on their jobs, reared families and decided their way of life. Blacks were confined by the White lawmakers/people to live in small congested communities, because there were legal real estate restrictions where Blacks could live. The restrictions were written on the land deeds.

The War of 1812

During the year of 1812, the United States declared a war against Great Britain, because Great Britain had killed many thousands of soldiers during the “Embargo Act”, (*The Book of Knowledge*).

The people of Connecticut felt that they had been ignored by the federal government, because the state had lost a large amount of money not being able to import their goods. The seacoast wasn’t protected against the English ships, and the men who were in the Connecticut state’s troops weren’t allowed to join the U.S.A. army because of anger in Connecticut.

The Hartford Convention

During 1812-1814, the British/English steadily attacked the Connecticut towns; the success of their attacks demonstrated the weaknesses of Connecticut’s army. The federal government still failed to provide protection

for the northeast seacoast. The lawmakers of Massachusetts and Rhode Island became concerned; the lawmakers from the three New England States had a meeting in Hartford, Connecticut on December 15, 1814. The lawmakers from the other states suspected treason; therefore, the war of 1812 immediately ended because of the Hartford Convention. The Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island angry lawmakers convened at a meeting due to an economic loss and no seacoast protection by the United States Federal Government.

Text D. The Northern States and Abolishment of Slavery

During the 1820s, a group of people who opposed slavery/abolitionists organized in Connecticut. The small number of Blacks who were living in Connecticut and Massachusetts had been freed. There were about six slaves in the very cold weather state of Connecticut. No cotton and sugar cane would produce in the northern states; subsequently, the state passed a law in 1848 to abolish slavery in Connecticut forever. The Blacks were still badly mistreated in this state even when the Whites told them they were free. That is why the abolitionists in Connecticut could really imagine and understand how Blacks were being treated in the Southern states.

There was another problem arising; the use of Black slaves in the South had become a large and *profitable business by 1860* due to a huge number of White plantation owners. The plantation owners strongly disagreed with the people who wanted slavery abolished, and new settlements in the western region of the country were increasing. The lawmakers of the southern states were trying to convince the western pioneers to practice using slavery when their territories were granted statehoods.

The Civil War

Abraham Lincoln was elected *President of the United States* in 1860. The nation was divided, because the northern states did not agree with slavery; the southern states favored slavery for profits. President Lincoln joined sides with the abolitionists; he declared that it was the right and duty of Congress to forbid slavery in the new states and territories.

The Confederate States of America were a government of southern states which declared themselves independent in December 1860 (South Carolina: Mississippi: Florida: Alabama: Georgia: Louisiana: Texas: Tennessee: Virginia) and Montgomery, Alabama was selected as the capital.

The southern soldiers fired the first shot from Fort Sumter located on the Charleston Harbor in South Carolina at a small group of United States Troops. President Lincoln called each state to be ready with a regiment of soldiers, and Connecticut had three regiments available. General Robert E. Lee, the leader of the Confederate army, surrendered to a Connecticut soldier. (1868) General John A. Logan, commander in chief of the "Grand Army of Republic", delegated May 30th to be called "Memorial Day". The northern soldiers organized the "Grand Army of the Republic", which was a veteran's association, to be established in each Connecticut town. Presently, Memorial Day is a national holiday.

The End of the Recorded Text(s) . . . The students will be given independent reading assignments periodically during the classes and for homework. Independent reading helps the students to improve their reading ability, by reading materials, that are interesting and relate to their classwork. Reading achievement is directly related to the amount of reading children do in school and outside of school. This is why it is very important for the instructor to teach study skills. The instructor, in Chapter One, can often help reluctant readers develop better study skills. Study skills will be addressed in the lesson plans. The teaching of good study habits will

also be addressed.

Developing Good Study Habits and Tips: There are many basic approaches to studying in class and at home. Some quick steps: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review/Record/Write. #1. The reader/writer should look for topics and subtopics as he/she surveys the reading material. #2. The *survey* phase is to gain a general idea of the kinds and things discussed in the selections. #3. Recitation (to recite) can help the reader remember what he/she has read. #4. When *surveying*, the reader/writer should review the questions at the end of the chapter(s). #5. The review time is a good time to study with another person. #6. The reader/writer should pay special attention to words and passages printed in italics.

Homework: Homework is important, because parents are their children's first and influential teachers. Parents that help their children to learn are very important to the students' academic success; it is not only gained by materialistic assets. The best way for parents to help their children, become better readers, are to read themselves; they should read to younger children and help all of the school age children with their homework. I strongly believe that students' achievements rise significantly when students are conscientious to complete their assignments. The quality of homework is important. The well-designed assignments should relate directly to the classwork and should extend the students' learning beyond the classroom. Homework is most useful when the instructor carefully prepares the assignments, lets the parents know the requirements and encourages them to help their children complete the assignments.

The homework assignments in this unit have been compiled, at the end of the total lesson plans that are required during class time. I will make copies, of the compiled homework requirements, so that they can be easily stapled in the section for homework assignments and placed in my lesson plan book. The students' homework requirements will be due on Fridays while this curriculum unit is being taught.

Cultural Literacy

Students should obtain *cultural literacy*, because they are motivated to listen/read/think/write/speak more fluently; they will also have a greater understanding when given background knowledge of the past and present. "Knowledge and understanding are called *cultural literacy*" in Herbert Walberg's article: *Teaching and Learning* (p. 41); Walberg also cites, "skimpy requirements and declining enrollments in high school history classes are contributing to a decline in students' knowledge of the past." The school schedule for classes are forty minutes each period. Before Reading: The grade seven student will have their permanent notebooks for *The Constitution and Selected Amendments* project. The students will be in their independent study groups (12-14) within a group during the class periods. There will be a bulletin board displaying the artwork of Pilgrims, *The Mayflower*, and the students' written reports of *The Mayflower*. The new vocabulary list will be displayed on the bulletin board and recorded in their notebooks. The students will read the words aloud and write the word meanings that the instructor has written on the chalkboard. The words will be preamble, declaration, Constitution, independence, bill, rights, guarantee(s), law, amendments, Federalist papers, law, delegate, government, national, article, confederation and federal. Homework: The students will write the phonetic spelling for each word; they will use their dictionaries. The students will receive 60 extra points toward their grades for each "homework" assignment that they complete during the marking period. Phonics helps students to understand the relationship between letters and sounds. Phonics helps to break the "code" that links the word(s) people hear along with the word(s) they see in print. Homework Requirements: I will prepare the students for the project during the *first* lesson. I will tell the students that they will be reading along with the cassette tapes silently, writing essays, and I will inform them of the many requirements that are expected of them to do such as: reading biographies about famous writers and others. The condensed biographies of famous writers will be prepared by the instructor, in a booklet, entitled *Selected Biographies by*

Famous Writers and People ; these people will be addressed in this unit.

Lessons During Class Time

Lesson: November-March

A. School and Homework Requirements

Objective The students will listen and read for specific information and *take notes* .

Note taking is important when information is presented orally or written. Note taking helps person to acquire precise recall; is a thinking process; makes listening, reading and writing a more active process. Students will be given the opportunity to identify the most relevant/important details/ideas, facts and sequences in brief form.

The instructor will tell the students to list their information in complete sentences. The students will examine the details and the like that they have listed at home/school and in class discussions. The students will use reference materials such as: dictionaries, encyclopedias, glossaries, an atlas and the like. The “Independent Group” of essayists will do the writing process “Phases 3 and 4” (Trader: pp. 320-24) on Tuesdays and/or Fridays during November and December.

B. Mastery Testing and Learning of Skills (A Sampler)

Objective The students will recognize statements of fact or opinion about things occurring in the past.

Evaluative thinking requires reading beyond the pages from a text. Literal/inferential skills require the students to have background/experience and content knowledge from which they can develop criteria for making judgments. Evaluative thinking skills are difficult to acquire without background information. Students need to recall facts; be deterred from misunderstanding information and knowing facts from opinions.

A *fact* is something that is *read* ; something that can be proved to be *true* .

An *opinion* is something that one thinks or believes. The person’s feelings or viewpoints about something and cannot be proved.

Sampler of the Quiz: Steps that Led to the *War of Independence*

Facts

#1. Benjamin Franklin wrote the Albany Plan of Union.

#2. On March 5, 1770, a fight started between a group of Colonists and British soldiers.

Opinions

#1. Benjamin Franklin’s Albany Plan of Union was a great idea.

#2 The British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre were more courageous than the Colonists who fought them.

C. Following Directions: The instructor will emphasize the thinking stage by encouraging the students to apply their knowledge and experiences. The students will use the chart of *facts* and *opinions* above to decide whether each of the following statements are *true* or *false*. The students will write T for *true* or F for *false* in the blank at the left. (70 points)

___ 1. It is a *fact* that Benjamin Franklin wrote the Albany Plan Union.

___ 2. It is an *opinion* that the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre were courageous than the colonists who fought them.

Lesson: November-March

Objective The students will identify main ideas and develop topic sentences.

#1. The students will read biographical information about some famous people in this unit who were instrumental in developing, writing and helping people in the American culture plus the New England Region society. The students will read—along with their printed materials and cassette tape(s). The materials were prepared by the instructor; a tape recorder will also be used. The students will identify stated main ideas/topic sentences. Students need to summarize the main details of each biography. They will learn to extract from the details, the central and/or main ideas from the details. *December*: The essayists will be learning to write at “Phase 4” (Trader: p. 323).

#2. The students will read biographical/historical facts about Thomas Hooker: Roger Sherman: Harriet B. Stowe: John Brown: Harriet Tubman (I will explain to the students that Harriet Tubman was honored guest in the homes of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Louisa May Alcott who lived in Massachusetts and are renown authors). Biographies of Ralph Emerson: Louisa May Alcott: Henry David Thoreau: John Whitter: Martin Luther King, Jr.: Jackie Robinson: Christa McAuliffe (12 people) will be read.

Lesson: December

A. Oral History/History Alive!

Objective The students will do interviews and write to learn.

Firsthand historical events can become so real. There are important events which occur in all persons’ lives. “How do the events affect us?” What personal ways do we remember the events? People can receive interesting information/answers when conducting an interview. Here are some hints: Think of an important local, national or international event (the day John F. Kennedy/Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed; the first moon landing: a “live concert” artist; the *Challenger* explosion; Rosa Parks and the like). Talk to someone about the

event; talk to a teacher, relative or a relative's friend. The students will use the questions as a guide and tips on interviewing; copies will be given to the students to staple in their *Constitution and Essay Project Notebooks* .

Tips on Interviewing

Follow these tips when you interview someone.

1. Bring a pencil and paper so you can take notes.
2. Find a quiet place for the two of you to talk.
3. Be sure the person is comfortable before you get started.
4. Know what you want to talk about before you begin.
5. Give the person plenty of time to answer each question.
6. Write down whatever you think is important.
7. Thank the person for the interview when you are done.

B. An Author's Visit in Our Classroom

Objective The students will actually meet a famous author and professor. The Co-author of War Comes to Willy Freeman : Christopher Collier (who is one of the co-authors with his brother, James) lives in Orange, Connecticut. He is a professor/teacher at the University of Connecticut; Christopher specializes in teaching and writing early American history for young readers and mainly the American Revolution. The lesson and discussion will be recorded on the cassette tape entitled: Author Christopher Collier's Visit .

Lesson: December-January

A. The Resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan

Objective #1. The students will learn the meaning and process of "scapegoating." #2. The students will be able to cite examples of the Klan's scapegoating and present research/statistical information.

The Ku Klux Klan, which is a hate group, has been around for many years. They become very visible and vocal largely when there is a great economic change (especially when there is a high rate of unemployment) in this Country. The Klan blames Blacks, women, other minorities and certain religious groups for what happens to them because of their individual shortcomings in the American society.

The instructor will write the word scapegoat on the chalkboard and chart/plus the word meanings. There will be two columns on the paper chart.

#1 The students' definitions

#2 The dictionary meaning

The students will look at the videotape of "Why I Quit the Klan"—An interview with C. P. Ellis who is a former president of the Durham, North Carolina, Chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. The instructor will use the brainstorming technique after the video lesson. The students' answers will be recorded on the chart with the use of group clustering (Ricchio: p. 10). Why did Ellis find other people to blame, because he had worked so hard and felt that he should have been wealthy by the time he has fifty years of age? Ellis had never been unemployed, but statistics show the many Blacks who have been unemployed. The unemployment rates have remained, twice as high as Whites, during the decades. How might people who are worried about losing their jobs feel? Do you think that Whites in the above position will likely to *scapegoat* Blacks? Why? The instructor will tell the students that the Klan tells White workers when unemployment rises; it is because Blacks are taking the jobs away from Whites. Unemployment is due to the change(s) in economics and industrial technology. The instructor will remind students that the definition myth includes "uncritical acceptance" of a belief which supports existing traditional practices/institutions of the Klan I traditional practices of White "supremacy." What do you think the Klans means when it says, "defends White rights?" What do you think of the Klan's visit on the Sally Jessy Raphael's show during Monday, June 15, 1987, (WTNH—Channel 8: Television Station in New Haven, Connecticut, the city which you live)? The instructor will give copies of the newspaper article: "The Teen-Age Members of the Ku Klux Klan" to the students. Carolyn Wyman was the reporter of the *New Haven Register*: June 15, 1987, pp. 23.

B. Civil Rights Era: Martin Luther King, Jr.

Lesson: January-February

Objective #1. The students will review Klan's beliefs, tactics, targets and goals. #2. Students will compare/contrast the Klan's vision of the " *United States Constitution and Selected Amendments* " with that of King's (the basic principles and creed). #3. Students will give reasons why people should act against the Klan, and they will be able to identify some appropriate and feasible activities students might plan. #4. The students will read copies of the excerpt from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech, "I Have a Dream" (August 28, 1963: "The March on Washington for Civil Rights"). #5. The students will read the statement by Martin D. Niemoller (who was a German minister) who actively opposed the *Nazis* in the 1930's. The instructor will explain briefly the meaning of Nazi and Concentration Camp. The instructor will put 3 columns on a chart:

"Viewpoints"

Klan's King's Niemoller's

The students will discuss the three persons' views and visions of "self and society." The instructor will record ideas on the chart, and the chart(s) will be displayed in the classroom.

A. The students will list the ways that the Klan violates our Country's Constitution: Declaration of Independence and the Amendments.

January : The essayists will be doing the process of writing "Phase 5."

February-March: Black History Month

Objective (A). The students will complete the process of writing at "Phase 6—The Final Draft" "What the

Constitution Means to Me and Our Country.”

Objective (B.) Cultural literacy and self-esteem are important for all persons to possess. Students, who are reluctant learners, need many positive reinforcements from themselves and the people around them. The learners need more encouragement to think, to orally express themselves and write their ideas in a comfortable but structured setting within the classroom(s). The instructor will ask the learners questions after they listen and read; the questions will encourage them to think critically.

#1. The students will read/listen to the cassette tape(s) silently, the excerpt of Frederick Douglass’ speech, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” They will also listen and read—along silently a poem by Langston Hughes, *Let America Be America Again*. The tapes were prepared by the instructor of Chapter I reading. The instructor will have two columns on the chart and will ask students questions about the two selections.

Frederick Douglass Langston Hughes

Compare the Douglass and Hughes’ ideas about “America”. The teacher will state that Douglass wrote his speech prior to the Civil War when slavery was not unlawful especially in the Southern states. #2. The instructor will initiate a discussion of Douglass’ address and some questions to be considered: How did the laws apply to Whites and Blacks when Douglass spoke? #3. How did they apply to women during the past and now? Why did Douglass say that the Fourth of July celebration was not for the American Blacks/slaves? What racial equality has taken place since the Abolition of Slavery: the Thirteenth Amendment? 1950’s and 1960’s laws of integration—how have the laws been enforced? What has the Ku Klux Klan done throughout the racial equality struggles?

Objective: (C.) The students will briefly recall the circumstances and purposes for writing and speaking about the origin and historic events of the United States Declaration of Independence: Constitution: Bill of Rights/and additional Amendments.

#1. The students will draw and illustrate the Bill of Rights and the other selected Amendments. The students will display the Bill of Rights which they have written for children: “Children’s Bill of Rights.” #2. There are twenty-six United States Amendments, and students will list the Amendments that are the most appealing to them as individuals; the students will explain—Why? (when writing/verbalizing). #3. The instructor will express to the students that all of the students with “brown hair” will go to lunch first, as of today. There will be a discussion of how the students feel about the new rule. How does it feel to be a member of the “brown hair group?” How does it feel not to belong to the group (written/oral expressions)? What are the freedoms that belong to every American citizen? What do you see happen around you (when relatives apply for jobs; file for loans and the like)? Many times the relatives or friends are denied because of their race, and many times they are more experienced and/or educated than the majority race. The instructor will list some positive ways on the chalkboard to respond when being treated unfairly such as: write to government officials; local newspapers; interview and other means of communication.

The students will look at a series of filmstrips with cassette tapes about: *Connecticut and the Civil War* (the emotional and moral issue “slavery” that divided our country). Some Famous People Who Lived in Connecticut: Harriet Stowe, Prudence Crandall (who started the school for Black girls), John Brown and Jackie Robinson (1919-1972). The students and the instructors will visit the homes of Harriet Stowe and Mark Twain’s Museums in Hartford, Connecticut, (famous authors during past centuries).

The students will evaluate what they learned during the use of this curriculum unit (November-March) by answering 20 questions/a questionnaire. The results will be sent to the International Reading Association

Headquarters: Chapter I/EERA Department.

Weekly Homework Requirements Due on Fridays :

November—Week One: The students will use encyclopedias, and write at least 20 facts about the *Mayflower Compact*.

Week Two: The students will write at least 20 facts about *Thomas Hooker and Connecticut*.

Week Three: The students will write at least 25 facts about *Roger Sherman* .

Week Four: The students will write at least 20 facts about the *War of Independence* .

December—Week One—Four: #1. The students will write at least 25 facts about the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Fourth of July* . #2. The students will write 20 facts about the *Connecticut Emancipation Law*. #3. The students will write 20 facts about the *Second Company of the Fourth Regiment* (the Black Regiment 1781). #4. (a) The students will write at least 25 facts about George Washington (the First President of the United States). (b.) They will list at least 10 facts about the *Embargo Act* . #5. Optional: The students will list at least 15 things/events that happened in the story, *The Soldier* when they watched the movie at home; the storybook will be available in the classroom for the students who are permitted, by their parents, to read the book.

January: Weeks One-Four: #1. The students will do independent reading. There will be selected literature for adolescents that pertains to Martin Luther King, Jr. #2. The students will review the typed *handouts* : Bill of Rights and the Eleventh through Twenty-Six Amendments which have been previously stapled in their notebooks. The students will list the ten *freedoms* that they consider most important. They will compare their lists, in class the following week, with the twenty-six amendments. The students will discuss the similarities and differences. #3. The students will write at least 20 facts about *Harriet Beecher Stowe* . (The instructor will briefly address the “Fugitive Slave Law.” She will explain the facts for the wrongness of the law and the need for abolishment). #4. The students will write at least 25 facts about *Abraham Lincoln* . When the students return their homework, they will review and discuss briefly the *Thirteenth Amendment* that was passed in 1865, and slavery was abolished by law.

February: Weeks One-Four: #1. The essayists will be doing their final drafts. They will do independent reading and write a one-page book report (24-28 grade seven students in the project). (There will be 15 books in each set; one group will read the storybook: *War Comes to Willy Freeman* . The second group will read the storybook: *Harriet Tubman and Freedom Train*. #2. The students will rotate the above books when completed. They will read factual excerpts written by the instructor entitled: *Washington and Two Marches 1963 and 1983* . King’s speech is based on the First Amendment—the Constitution of the United States: King explains in his speech, “why the oppressed people can no longer wait for their Constitutional rights; the dream and symbol of democracy; the threats to the dream; the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan and what has to be done to fulfill the dream for democracy in our Country.” #3. The students will continue reading factual issues, to think positive about Afro Americans, other ethnic groups and their accomplishments. #4. The students will write at least 20 facts about Jackie Robinson (1919-1972). One of the main reasons, for this homework assignment, is because the students attend the school that has Robinson’s name. #5. The students will read during the first week of March, the storybook entitled: *Heroes of the Challenger* : “Christa McAuliffe” (p. 19). Christa was the first teacher-astronaut, and she lived in Concord, New Hampshire. The students will submit the book report during the first week of March (Friday 4, 1988).

Concluding, it is very important to let the students, in the middle school grades, continue to draw or sketch when they are writing book reports, drafts, and free writing during class time, plus for homework assignments. I have witnessed the dependent and semi-dependent groups who have greater difficulties, with the writing skills, usually gain more courage to write if they are allowed to sketch and/or draw for several minutes before the process of writing. Speaking and listening, in addition to reading and writing, are good foundations to help students become better readers and writers. This is why I think that the Chapter One students will benefit a great deal educationally when I present this unit.

Bibliography for Teachers

Applebee, Andrew N. "Writing in the Secondary Schools" *Literature and the Content Areas* . Virginia: Association for Curriculum Development, 1984. The book includes models of instruction for reading and thinking. The process for comprehending and responding to "text" is most informative.

Ehrenberg, Sydelle D. "Basics" *Building and Applying Strategies for Intellectual Competencies in Students* : Florida: Institute for Curriculum and Instruction, 1978. The article emphasizes common elements to concept-learning strategies. One will find information which is very easy to read, useful and enlightening. The article clearly explains what curriculum materials should provide.

Koch, Kenneth. *Wishes, Lies and Dreams* . New York: Vantage Book, 1970. The book includes the various ways to teach youngsters how to write poetry. Readable poems by young authors are in the book.

Rico, Gabriele L. *Writing the Natural Way*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983. The book emphasized using the right-brain techniques to release one's expressive powers. The clustering is highly useful for creative writing.

Shanker, Albert. "Increasing Funds for Chapter One Programs: A Nation Prepared" *Teachers for the 21st Century* . Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers National Press Club, 1987. The booklet is about historic teaching as a profession and the need to continue Chapter One Programs. There are recommendations that are justifiable.

Trader, Barbara. "Practical Writing in the Intermediate Grades" *The Process of Writing* . Connecticut: Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, vol. 4, 1986. The curriculum unit consists of the writing process and the many phases of the process. Many techniques for teaching free writing and other forms of writing are included.

United States Education Department, *Title and Chapter One Reading Statistics* . Washington, D.C.: Federal Government Press, 1986.

Walberg, Herbert. "Cultural Literacy" *Teaching and Learning* . Illinois: University of Illinois Publications, 1983. The chapter explains in details why it is important for students to have both "knowledge and understanding." Cultural literacy is highly associated with "knowledge and understanding" according to the research.

Wyman, Carolyn. "The Klan's Visit on the Sally Jessy Raphael's Show" *WTNH Channel 8: Television and the New Haven Register* (June 15, 1987), pp. 23-24. The show and article were mainly about the "Klan and Their Teenage Children." The issue is current and very informative in New Haven, Connecticut.

Reading Lists for Students

Barstow, Robbins and Leeke, John. "Why I Quit the Klan" An Interview *with C. P. Ellis* . Washington, D.C.: The National Education association Press, 1981. The article is based on oral history. It reveals interesting facts about the hate group.

Charnes, Ruth (Staff Coordinator). *Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)* , 100 Paperback Books. New York: The Council on Interracial Books for Children Publishers, 1986: (Refer below).

Cohen, Daniel and Susan. "Christa McAuliffe" *Who Are the Heroes of the Challenger*. New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1986. The book consists of brief biographies about the astronauts who died. Christa was from New Hampshire and was the first teacher astronaut.

Collier, Christopher and James. *War Comes to Willy Freeman* . New Jersey: Dell Publishers, 1983. Willy disguised as a boy during the Revolutionary War. Willy had witnessed her father's death at the hands of the Redcoats. The British soldiers took her mother to New York City as a prisoner, and Willy's search for her mother was successful.

Sterling, Dorothy. "The Story of Harriet Tubman" *Freedom Train* . New York: Scholastic Publishers, Inc. 1954. The book is a biography of Harriet Tubman. It contains an interesting account of her dangerous and courageous ventures.

#1. Audio-Visual Materials: Filmstrips and Cassettes— *Connecticut: The Civil War and Some of the Famous People Who Lived in Connecticut* . Vermont: The New England Historical Society, 1983. The audio-visual materials are excellent for the middle school students, and they are easier for the students to comprehend.

#2 *Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)* : One hundred paperback books will be located in the author's, of this unit, classroom at Jackie Robinson Middle School. There will be ten books in each set with the same titles (ten sets of tens) such as, *Harriet Tubman : Harriet Beecher Stowe : War Comes to Willy Freeman : Martin Luther King, Jr. and His Speeches: Heroes of the Challenger : Jackie Robinson Story : The Laws and Children : Miniature Copies of the Bill of Rights and Preamble : The Declaration of Independence: The United States Constitution and Pictures* . Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc.

#3. *An Interview with C. P. Ellis*, the article is located in my classroom (JRMS).

#4. Frederick Douglass' speech, "what to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" and Langston Hughes' poem, *Let America Be America Again* , will be in my classroom.

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