

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN THE SECONDARY
ENGLISH CLASSROOM: A PRESERVICE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE

by
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ABSTRACT

JENNA LEA SMILEY: The Implementation of Multicultural Literature in the Secondary English Classroom: A Preservice Teacher's Experience (Under the direction of Susan McClelland)

Even though the United States is more diverse than ever before in its history, selected literary texts in the secondary English curriculum have largely remained the same over past decades with minimal inclusion of multicultural literature - literature that is written by or about minority cultures. Multicultural literature is a subset of the greater idea of multicultural education, which is an education that is inclusive of all cultures with the goal of preparing all students to be productive citizens in a diverse, global society. Teachers are hesitant to use multicultural literature because of their implicit biases, neglect of inquiry, and limitations of literary theory. As a preservice teacher, I developed a unit with the goal of multicultural literature inclusion and collected work samples from high school students at my clinical placement in North Mississippi. Students and parents provided consent forms as approved by the University of Mississippi's International Review Board in order to have their work included in this research. After obtaining consent, I analyzed these work samples to determine the student's reading discourse as either universalist, individualist, eurocentric, or pluralistic. Students appealed to a combination of these reading discourses when engaging with multicultural literature. I also surveyed the students about their experience during the multicultural unit, and many students insisted that the unit could have been improved with a more diverse selection of texts and more discussion of race and culture. For multicultural literature to be effective, teachers must be professionals of inquiry as they expand their content knowledge, and they must instruct students in literary theory when analyzing literary texts. The study concluded that teachers need

to continue challenging themselves and their students to approach multicultural literature in the secondary classroom to best prepare students for collaboration in the twenty-first century.

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Introduction

Books have always been a part of my life. On a bookshelf, a person's identity and interests are on display for everyone. Fantasy and historical fiction are personal favorites because these books are passports, transporting me to a new place and transforming me into a completely different person as I step into the shoes of another. I cherished every journey I took within the pages of a book, but I never realized how narrow my perspective was on life. Even though I considered myself well read, I had never truly stepped outside of my comfort zone and challenged myself. I travelled the world through my books, explored different cultures, and gazed upon different peoples, but I had never confronted the reality of how narrow my world view, my perspective on life, and my exposure to other cultures was.

After my sophomore year of college, I had the opportunity to spend my summer in the rural villages of Indonesia. This was the first time I had ever left the safety of the United States. While in Indonesia, I immersed myself in a culture that was greatly different from what I had experienced or even observed in the United States. I spent my days hiking between villages where people lived in bamboo, stilted homes with no air-conditioning. Electricity was only available for several hours after dark, and indoor plumbing was a luxury. Indonesia is the most highly populated Muslim country in the world, so I literally heard the call to prayer five times a day. Just as one sees Southern Baptist or United Methodist Churches on every corner in the South, I encountered mosques just as frequently.

Beyond architecture, the Indonesian cultural values manifested in its people. Hospitality was at the core as the people in these bamboo houses selflessly welcomed me, a stranger, into their lives and offered anything in their possession for my comfort. I might not have been as

fortunate if I had approached an American home in the same manner. I also visited several Indonesian schools where I would share my experience as an American with high school students. The children on these islands had the greatest impact on me. They were so eager to learn English, so I would trade English words for Bahasa with them by letting them point at objects, say the word in Bahasa and then in English. In turn, I would say the word in English and then attempt it in Bahasa. Although I understood only a few of the words the children were saying, we found ourselves laughing and supporting each other – literally making a personal connection at some level. Time with the children brought us closer together and when the summer came to an end, I viewed these Indonesian children as a part of my family and the community as my second home.

Upon returning to the United States, I underwent culture shock with my own culture as I awkwardly adjusted to my former life after my international experience. I was overwhelmed by America's fast pace and intense informational output, missing the days when I hiked up mountains, disconnected from the rest of the world. More importantly, I became more aware of people who looked and dressed different from me: Muslim women wearing hijabs, black fraternity men "strolling" on campus, Asian friends sharing classes with me, and so many more. As my awareness broadened, I truly realized how little I knew about other cultural groups in the United States. Even though we are all American citizens, we each have a different story based on our roles in society. I grew up with these people, but I never considered how the life of a Muslim American, an African American, or anyone that did not look like me could be different than my experience because of differing cultures and our society's history. I wanted to know why I did not know these stories.

As I became more aware of my cultural blindness, I began to see the array of colors,

ethnicities, and cultures that make up the United States. Unfortunately, this diversity is not represented in current English curricula in American high schools. I attended a public school in Mississippi, and I informally recalled the novels that were used in my secondary English classes. Of the twenty-two novels, only three contain diverse characters or addressed racial themes: *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Only *A Raisin in the Sun* is authored by an African American. In my tenth grade English class, which should focus on world literature, two of the five books have an international origin, and both are Holocaust autobiographies: *Night* and *The Hiding Place*. The other three novels are set in the United States with one that directly addressed race and prejudice, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This course should have embraced multicultural variety but was limited by a Eurocentric selection, meaning it “cannot be thought about without thinking of Europe itself,” since two novels were authored by Europeans, the only representation of an international influence in the course (Nordenbo 1995). While I enjoyed many of these novels, I cannot ignore in retrospect that most of the selections were about and authored by white males. These books touch on multiracial themes, but the texts do not present complete multicultural perspectives because they are primarily authored by one race. With only one race telling the story, we are left with incomplete pictures of racial and ethnic diversity, missing a large part of the United States and the rest of the world.

Even though my experience cannot holistically represent every American high school, I doubt that multicultural literature is a cornerstone for English curricula. In his work, *Literature in the Secondary School: Studies of Curriculum and Instruction in the United States*, Arthur Applebee surveyed the most popular novels taught in English classrooms in 1993. The list of high school novels Applebee produced looks very similar to the reading list from my high school

curriculum: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Scarlet Letter*, *Great Gatsby*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *The Crucible* (98). When these titles were distributed based on popularity at certain grade levels, they were sorted in almost the exact same order that was used in my own English classes. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* was popular to be taught in tenth grade, which is when I read the novel as well. In the span of twenty years, secondary reading lists in my experience have remained virtually the same.

I also examined the Common Core State Standards' Text Exemplar list. Common Core is a set of standards that were developed to outline the skills and knowledge needed for students to be considered college and career ready. It has been adopted by forty-two states, and while it does not prescribe a curriculum, it does provide a recommended reading list. The standards come with a text exemplar list that was created by a working group of leading teachers and researchers who collected and evaluated recommendations based on text complexity, quality, and range. The work group's recommendations previously experienced success as central texts with students (Common core state standards... p. 2). This list contains various text recommendations for K-12 English and history classes, and can be easily found on Common Core's website. I focused on the story texts that were selected for 9-12th grades. For 9-10th grades, 19% of the authors on the list were non-white while 25% of authors were non-white on the 11-12th grade list. While this expanded list which includes multicultural literature is more inclusive than it was ten years ago, I frankly have never read or heard of most of the additional multicultural titles, which demonstrates my lack of exposure to these texts in high school and a lack of knowledge in this area. Even though the list is improving, the presence and awareness for female and diverse cultural authors is still lacking.

As a high school English teacher, I want to teach a curriculum that reflects and embraces a diverse society. I was deprived the opportunity to experience this diversity throughout high school, and through my interactions with other students from across the nation, it has become apparent that most students who attend public schools share this common experience. I want all my students to know that I value their identities and cultures, so I must share and teach their stories with the rest of the class. Incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum is not simply adding books with characters of different colors: it is transforming every lesson to acknowledge and interact with all diverse perspectives while meeting the state standards. My research is my journey in defining multicultural literature, learning about the obstacles in its implementation, and then putting the skill and theory into practice with my own lesson planning.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The integration of multicultural literature in the high school English curriculum has been part of the academic discussion for over fifty years, but in reality, multicultural literature has not been fully embraced and implemented in classrooms. Multicultural literature is not easily defined, and its breadth of influence has broadened since a reference in the 1960's with the publication of Nancy Larrick's article, "The All-White World of Children's Books." A former president of the International Reading Association, Larrick surveyed publishers, librarians, and editors to inquire about children's book content, specifically for their representation of minorities. The Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. was gaining momentum at this time, but the books that were published by major publishing companies mostly contained white protagonists and illustrations with all white people. African American characters were present in an average of 6.7 percent of children's books published over a three-year timeframe, 1962-1964. Further, the illustrations did not include African Americans, even in crowded zoos and cities where diversification would be expected (Larrick 64). The presentations of black characters were usually not strongly positive or realistic since they mostly played the quiet, accepting "colored person": a black comrade to the white protagonist or the main character who did not openly defy racial injustices (65). These stories did not represent a complete narrative of people of color, specifically the African Americans. With these results, Larrick promoted the need for multicultural literature from the black community's perspective.

Multicultural literature would soon encompass more than just an African American focus and agenda. While literature brought attention to the issue, its inclusion is a smaller component under the greater ideology of multicultural education. With its conception in the 1960s,

multicultural education struggled to find consistency within academic circles. In his article “Shaping the Future of Multicultural Education,” James A. Banks advocates for clarity in defining terms related to multicultural education so that the movement would be able to move forward, after a previous failed attempt that emerged in the post-World War II era. The term multicultural education alone implies little more than education related to a variety of cultural groups (Banks 1979 p. 238). This former definition lacks specificity with no apparent goal. With a general definition, change in education was slow as teachers at the time did not understand the implications of a multicultural education, justifying that multicultural education was unneeded by claiming that racial tensions did not exist or that multiple cultural groups did not exist in their schools (Banks 244). These teacher objections would make sense if multicultural education was only meant to address the education of multicultural groups, but its purpose is broader and has evolved over the decades as it seeks to represent all cultural groups appropriately and consistently throughout the school year.

Since the mid-twentieth century, scholars have made efforts to thoroughly define the purpose of multicultural education as a changing force in the education system and not simply an addition to an established system. They advocate that multicultural education is not meant to be a one-time application in order to address intolerance or develop a sense of inclusion, but its goal is to completely transform the educational system and society (Cai and Bishop 58). Currently, incorporating multicultural literature is limited to an additional unit in a textbook or a designated month when cultures are highlighted. However, the conversations surrounding the culture or the contributions of the individuals from that culture are usually not discussed for the rest of the year. Multicultural education advocates call to have these discussions about other cultures taking place throughout the academic year, embedded in the curriculum of each grade and integrated

naturally. In a later publication, Banks will advocate that the goal of multicultural education is to teach citizens the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for success in a modern, global society (Banks 1994). These new skills and attitudes acknowledge that the common citizen needs the ability to understand and interact with fellow citizens coming from differing cultural backgrounds if humanistic society is to continue to thrive.

The world has changed drastically since the mid-twentieth century. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, white students account for roughly less than fifty percent of the student population while the other fifty percent consists of growing proportions of African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and an increasing number of students from mixed backgrounds as of the Fall of 2015 (The Condition of Education... par. 2). As the minority populations continue to increase, a single race no longer holds a solid majority. Still, the current English classroom continues to operate in the same manner that it did over fifty years ago in post-desegregation, as demonstrated in Applebee's study in 1993 and my personal experiences. Since the country's diversity has evolved, the literature chosen for the classroom needs to reflect this growing diversity.

Cai (2002) makes the conclusion that the most popular and accepted definition of multicultural literature is, "literature about racial or ethnic minority groups that are culturally and socially different from the white Anglo-Saxon majority in the United States, whose largely middle-class values and customs are most represented in American literature" (p. 12). Multicultural literature should be a foil to the typical, predominant white literature in English classrooms as it brings attention to minority perspectives. A factor that limits multicultural literature is the assumption that it is only concerned with the benefit of another cultural group and is inherently anti-white. Referring to Larrick's article, multicultural education began to

emerge with the Civil Rights Movement as African Americans sought for equal representation in all spheres of American life. With these origins, scholars and professionals assume that multicultural education is focused solely on the African American community. Banks (1994) voices against this stereotype and makes the statement that multicultural education is for all minority groups as well as the predominant white community in order, “to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they will need to survive and function effectively in a future U.S. society in which one out of every three people will be a person of color” (17). All students need to be taught how to be a citizen in a diverse, global society. In order to learn the knowledge and the skills, students need opportunities to engage in the study of a variety of cultures that are different from their own. Teachers need to be able to bring these experiences into the classroom, and multicultural literature can be an effective gateway.

Teachers’ education backgrounds are laced with values instilled by Anglo-Saxons, and they are coming from an education background that has instilled a value for Eurocentric literature, since this is what has been predominately taught over the last several decades. Then, teachers face the pressure of choosing books for a younger generation that is even further removed from traditional texts. According to a reading report conducted by Common Sense Media (2014), the percentage of teenagers who reported that they read for pleasure dropped dramatically between 1984 and 2014. The report indicates a drop from 70% to 53% for thirteen year olds and from 60% to 45% for seventeen year olds (5). Based on this report, students are reading less, so this could lead teachers to assume that the books read in class may be the only books some of their students will read that year. Hazel Rochman (2003) affirms teacher’s concerns in this sentiment, saying, “If you think that the book you're promoting is the only one kids are ever going to read on a subject... then there's intense pressure to choose the ‘right’ book

with the ‘right’ message” (104). Not only are teachers selecting books that will pique their students’ interests, but these books must also be the best representation for an entire body of literature. This task can be intimidating for white, middle-class teachers as they try to determine which book best represent a culture when they are not a part of it. With the added pressure that their classrooms might be the only opportunity for a student to read works by Shakespeare or other American or British canonical writers, it is not surprising that teachers are more willing to choose a text that has withstood the test of time instead of risking time and effort with a book that has not been frequently taught in class.

Again, the American education system has shown favor for literature authored by mostly white authors. While educators might not be intentionally selecting books because of the writer’s skin tone, the favoritism comes from the implicit values toward certain content and curriculum. Banks recognizes that the selection of knowledge and the design of pedagogy are influenced by implicit values and biases (35). These implicit biases can be concerned with a piece of literature’s long-term potential and artistic quality as well as a teacher’s preference for certain works over others. However, a teacher should be able to recognize when she or he is allowing her or his implicit biases to motivate the decision-making and to reconsider if their literary choices represent a multicultural spectrum. Maxine Greene (1994) discusses implicit biases and refers to her background knowledge and her experience as her personal landscape, and she interacts with the rest of the world coming from this landscape (14). She acknowledges that her landscape has gaps, places in which she has not connected her experience to her multiplicit society or acknowledged the existence of a pluralistic narrative. Teachers must be able to reflect on their personal landscapes and aim to fill in the gaps where “our selves and the selves of others are to be intertwined,” recognizing that there are multiple ways to approach the world (21). A

teacher needs to affirm her or his landscape and admit that there are parts of the human experience that are missing in their individual landscape because of her or his cultural background and intersectional politics of location.

To close these gaps within our landscapes, we must have open minds and be willing to continuously educate ourselves as teachers. Baker explains that “teachers are products of their environments and their education,” and recommends that one way a teacher can fill her or his landscape is having experiences with other cultures (Baker 1994). If a teacher continues to remain in a homogenous cultural sphere, then she or he will most likely never encounter another person from a differing background, thus never facing any challenges to their individual landscape. While a teacher may not be able to afford frequent international excursions, she or he must make an effort to reach out to the other cultural groups that live within the communities. Subrahmayan and colleagues noted that teacher education needed to provide these cultural experiences for its students, knowing that many of them never encountered anything much different than their hometowns in Minnesota. They also emphasize “teacher as a researcher,” a foundation that supports teachers to be professionals of inquiry, especially when it comes to the inclusion of people of all cultural backgrounds (2000, p. 170). These teachers are active in constantly innovating and seeking out new knowledge for their classrooms. Exposure to new ideas is essential to filling the gaps in landscapes.

A major factor that prevents teachers from accepting the gaps in their personal landscapes is the misconception that literature can be entirely universal. Universalism is “the notion of a unitary and homogenous human nature,” transcending social barriers for relatability to all people and creating the feeling of sameness (Yenika-Agbaw 2003 p. 240). With this ideology, a teacher is comfortable with choosing a canonical book because students should be able to connect with it

through its universality, but the teacher is denying how cultural differences affect people. Yu Ren Dong is an associate professor in secondary education at Queens College in New York where she teaches courses in using multicultural literature. She was happy that her students were able to recognize texts as cultural representatives, but they focused on a “romantic celebration of the individual” and did not recognize how culture specifically impacted the characters’ lives (2005, p. 371-2). On a reading of a Puerto Rican’s concerns for American interference, teachers in training made broad generalizations about all cultures instead of specifically identifying how Puerto Rico’s culture interacts with these changes. Steven Z. Athanases (2006) goes as far to say that these teachers are “attempting to remain blind to color,” (p. 18) which practically defeats the purpose of reading multicultural literature if teachers are not encouraging students to identify the cultural differences instead of finding comfort in the interchangeability of personal experiences.

Athanases (2006) also cautions that teachers should avoid defaulting to a universalist, which is an approach that reinforces the normalization of white culture by making assertions that other cultures are “just like we are” (18). As an example, Vinz records a discussion in Mr. Lloyd’s classroom during a discussion of Nadine Gordimer’s “Comrades,” a short story about a white woman encountering three black teenagers under the Apartheid system in South Africa. Several students make comments that imply the United States has handled race relations better and should be a model of comparison while disregarding the cultural differences between the two countries (2000, p. 143). These students are assuming that every government or culture should handle race relations in the same way of their own culture without acknowledging that South Africa must have its own legislation and history with these issues. Mr. Lloyd could be tempted to accept this reaction from his students, but he must raise the cultural consciousness of his students by challenging them to take into account the entire story while avoiding comparison

between the text and their personal cultural narrative. Another teacher, Mr. Davis, learns to appreciate the cultural differences in his reading of Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* by realizing that the differences did not make the multicultural literature difficult but sees them as, "artistic practices that different cultures bring to bear," and these other artistic practices are worth analyzing and interpreting (Vinz 2000, p. 149). Mr. Davis could easily look over these cultural differences and teach the text as he would any other piece of literature, affirming his own cultural strategy. Teachers need to be cautious of resorting to a universalist approach because it does not progress the use of multicultural literature by not recognizing the cultural differences' impact on literature.

In order to recognize cultural differences, teachers need the knowledge of other cultures. According to Dong (2005), many teachers are hesitant in using multicultural literature because they feel that they have not obtained a substantial amount of knowledge about cultural groups during their preservice time (p. 367). Since teachers are unequipped when entering the field, they do not have the self-confidence to stand in front of a classroom and teach multicultural literature because they fear they will accidentally ignore certain cultural aspects or reinforce cultural stereotypes. In response to the concern that a teacher can never know enough about cultural groups, Banks says that beyond learning historical and cultural contexts, teachers need to "attain a process for looking at the American experience so that they can raise questions" (86). The idea that a teacher needs to know absolutely everything about all people groups in order to achieve proper multicultural education is daunting and near impossible. Cai (2002) states simply, "No expert knows every culture in the world" (148). Still, teachers should be able to approach literature and consider the perspective of other cultural groups, even though they are not directly mentioned. By knowing that these groups are present, teachers can further explore these

perspectives and train their students to approach literature and history in the same way.

While a teacher who admits that she or he is unequipped to adequately teach different cultural perspectives has taken a step in the right direction, a lack of knowledge should not be an excuse to avoid teaching multicultural literature. Teachers should be lifelong learners, continually broadening their horizons through expanding their own reading choices to include multicultural perspectives. Stallworth (2006) emphasizes that simply good teaching is an essential key in teaching multicultural literature because good teachers will challenge their personal perspectives to create literary communities that contextualize all kinds of literature (480). However, good teaching requires plenty of resources and research in order to effectively present multicultural literature in classrooms. When reviewing the required reading curriculum in England and Australia, the curriculum advisors admitted that the addition of cultural texts to the prescribed reading list was difficult to accomplish because critical material and training regarding multicultural literature are unavailable, or very lacking, for teachers (Jogie 2015 p. 295). For these two countries, they are not going to require the inclusion of multicultural literature if there are not enough resources for their teachers. The teachers would be solely responsible for creating the teaching strategies and activities for their students, which is a skill that administration should be encouraging teachers instead of completely depending on preexisting material. Critical reception for multicultural literature is emerging and continuously growing. For an English classroom, an experienced teacher will know that any piece of literature, whether contemporary or classic, European or Asian, can be used to teach the literary elements that are required in the curriculum and standards.

Stallworth was not incorrect in her assertion that good teaching is essential when incorporating multicultural literature, but what constitutes as good teaching for typical canonical

literature may not be appropriate for the new texts. Along with recognizing the cultural differences between literature, teachers also need to transform their teaching strategies and pedagogy when studying multicultural texts. Vinz described the current inclusion of multicultural literature as stitching new material with old practices and advocated for a need to particularize as opposed to a universalist approach, meaning that a reader should question the constructions and understand “literature as the product of locations, not connections” (2000 p. 128). Again, the reader should take into account the unique aspects of literature’s characteristics and location instead of initially making connections between the work and the reader. Instead of simplifying the literature, the teacher must be willing to demonstrate the complexities and overlaps in identities, which seems to be working against a current pedagogy of presenting all material as relevant to a student by drawing generalizations (Vinz 2000 p. 144). A simple way to begin a change for particularization is to teach the cultural differences before pointing out the similarities between cultures in order to avoid the universalist encounter, whether that is by race, gender, age, ability, etc. (Baker 1994). Every person has a number of identities by which she or he is viewing the world. Subrahmanyam refers to this as the “existence of multiple selves” and by placing value on the differences before the similarities, students will have a new framework when engaging and analyzing the literature. When avoiding a universalist approach, teachers will have to break a cycle of dependency on pre-made, commercial materials for the classroom and begin developing their own resources, learning how to maintain an integrity for multicultural analyses for themselves (Gay 1992, p. 39). Implementation of multicultural literature is not for the weak-minded.

The teacher also needs to reconsider the organization of content in her or his curriculum. Multicultural literature needs to be strategically placed throughout the curriculum, recognizing

that the exclusion of literature during certain segments could lead to a misconception of value. Mr. Connors of Lincoln High School makes the statement, “You always have to be reinventing yourself,” when explaining his process of creating his own materials that depict a flowchart in the process of history (Dolby 2000 p. 157). Even though Mr. Connors does not limit himself by teaching solely from a textbook, his flow chart creates an impression that the events contained within his designed timeline are the most important, which also happen to be focused on white European or American figures, marginalizing strands of minority histories. The addition of multicultural literature and history does not equal a change in philosophy if a predominately white narrative continues to be the center of the discussion. Instead of a flow chart, Dolby proposes a better way to view history and literature as yarn, multiple strands wrapping and interacting with each other, insisting that one cannot be discussed without the other (2000, p. 166).

Dong (2005) also points out how students can be a valuable resource in teaching multicultural literature if there are students who identify with the same culture in a text. She explains that teachers should take advantage of this by encouraging these students to share their insider knowledge and adds, “These dynamics may require that the teacher play the role of the learner, thus offering an opportunity for students to take on the voice of authority and engage in the discussion at a deeper level” (381). With this reverse in role-play, the teacher is able to empower her or his students and encourage them to take ownership of their own learning process. However, a student can be extremely overwhelmed when she or he is always the “voice” for her or his cultural group. The teacher needs to know when it is appropriate to rely on her or his student’s representation in the classroom and when to be the “mediator of culture” (Baker 1994 p. 85).

To develop a respect for all cultures within a classroom, students need to have a sense of group cohesion (Gay 1992 p. 44). A classroom should strive to be a community of knowledge where all differing opinions are heard and respected. Back to Mr. Lloyd's classroom discussion on the short story "Comrades," Vinz interviewed several students after the discussion about the story took place. Three students expressed hesitation or reconfiguration to their responses for concern that they would disrupt the peace in the classroom while also wanting to please Mr. Lloyd. One African American student felt accused of always seeing literature as about race while a Caucasian girl thought she was not able to contribute to the discussion because she does not want to feel responsible for the mistakes of her cultural group as a whole (Vinz 2000 p. 145). These students are concerned about their peers' reactions to their responses on the literature, and by choosing to be silent on these ideas, Mr. Lloyd is not going to be aware of the interpersonal situations of his students. The hesitations will also cause rifts between classmates and do not optimize the opportunity for change. Teachers need to be aware that more is occurring underneath a student's surface and continue to make the classroom a comfortable setting to have these discussions. It is the teacher's responsibility to create an environment that promotes collaborative learning. The teacher must also remember that each individual is unique as well as each individual is a member of a group that has common characteristics (Subrahmayan 2000 p. 171). The teacher needs to recognize this each of her or his students, so she can be able to meet her or his students' needs at an individual level as well as acknowledging the students' cultural groups.

Being aware of every student's current social needs can be a daunting task, but if the teacher creates an environment that holds every person responsible for the acknowledgement and respect of another person, then everyone in the classroom will bear that burden. Applebaum

(2002) recognizes that “teachers value and want to be sensitive to students’ differences,” but traditional classroom practices can contradict and prevent teachers from meeting each student (p. 42). Most classrooms operate in a way that expects everyone to behave in the same way, creating a manageable homogenous atmosphere that promotes a belief that each person performs and thinks in the same way as everyone else. To destroy this belief and to be effective in multicultural education, Geneva Gay (1992) recommends the normalizaiton of pluralization, the recognition of multiple cultures, perspectives, and beliefs (Gay p. 48). For too long, diversity has been identified as a problem to be resolved within the education system instead of embracing it as a strength. Diversity is as natural in the classroom as it is in the rest of the country, but the system has continued to operate for the purpose of a monoculture by training everyone to fit the same standard. To think or engage differently is seen as obscure and unnatural. With the normalizaiton of pluralizaiton, whole groups will not only be seen as a collective but also at the individual level (Pate 1992 p. 144). Subrahmanyam views it as unique individuals and individuals as members of groups (p. 171). With pluralization, the focus is placed on the individual.

Teachers need to be aware of what literary theory is being favored in their instruction, and most of them are not aware of the discourse position that they are taking when lecturing to students. A teacher may primarily use a New Criticism approach, which has readers focus on what is contained in the text as a whole without acknowledging any social or historical influences on the text, including the author’s personal influences. Some might be comfortable with a neo-Aristoletian reading, which acknowledges “‘pluralistic’ willingness,” or the text’s plausibility for social or political influences, but the reader does not emphasize its political or social significance because the reader focuses on the “emotional effect” that is produced by the character’s actions (Ley p. 10). There are several others, but regardless of what literary theory is

used, teachers tend to use one exclusively instead of accepting the conflict and ambiguity in multiple readings. As Ley explains in a teacher's sourcebook for literary theory, "The teacher becomes a facilitator, leading the exploration, realizing that one's view of literature and the meaning derived from it are conditioned by the reader's needs, the life experiences of the reader, her or his special interests, and the intellect brought to bear on the work in question" (Ley p. 25). Teachers should promote frameworks rejecting a single, authoritative reading of a text by encouraging multiple theoretical readings of literature and moving beyond an emotional experience.

For multicultural literature, reader-response theory limits the reading by not recognizing acting institutional forces, so teachers need to instruct their students in using a sociocultural theory. This intellect includes the text's cultural and historical implications and critiquing oppressive societal systems (Beach et.al 2008 p. 67). While a teacher needs to encourage her or his students to have a personal response to the text, she or he also needs to advocate that the reader should not only respond to the text but also make a transaction. The reader-response theory causes students to assume "a cultural model of race as simply a matter of individual choice," meaning that the issue of race can be overlooked by fitting the reading into a universalist appeal (Beach et.al p. 69). In these sociocultural transactions, students should be able to identify the differences between cultures and analyze systematic oppressions that are active in the text, which will produce conflicts and tensions between the reader's personal worldview and the text's proposed evaluations and critiques.

With the use of literary criticism in the classroom, teachers will be asking their students higher order thinking questions over simple recall of information from the text. Literary analysis and criticism are higher order components of literary competency, which is cited from Coenen as

“constructing coherence within a text to enhance comprehension, observing coherence and difference between texts, relating the text to the world (society and the personal world of the author) and relating personal judgement about the literary work to that of other readers” (Witte et. al 2012 p. 4). In other words, the student is able to comprehend and analyze the text as a whole while recognizing the differences between one text with another and relating it to its cultural and historical context. While Witte and his colleagues were primarily focused on developing a measurement scale for literary competency in upper secondary grades, the researchers identified the need for cultural placement in comprehension but do not address how to increase cultural and literary knowledge in the classroom. The Mississippi state standards seem to only recommend the use of various literary theories by requiring “critical reading,” a term that is largely left for interpretation by the teacher (“Mississippi College and Career Standards” 2016 p. 10). With no clear requirement for literary criticism, only for literary competence, teachers will use the theories they have mastered when instructing their students.

Teachers are required to adhere to national, state, and even district standards within their schools. To meet the standards, teachers must present clear results from their students’ progress, but teachers are not required by the standards to use a certain method or vehicle to produce the desired results. In her article “The Ghosts of the School Curriculum: Past, Present, and Future,” Kenway (2008) laments a current curriculum that is solely focused on numbers and measurements without acknowledging the social influences of society and the rest of the world since standards value a certain kind of knowledge: “mathematical, scientific, technological, functional literacy and problem solving” (p. 6). Placing values on these knowledge forms have caused educators to overlook the need for social development, along with multicultural literature, in regard to interacting with a variety of cultures even though most educators are likely to agree

that students need skills to interact with a diverse population. Kenway (2008) then makes a call for action - an ethical matter by highlighting the need to produce national and global citizens who are conscious of and take responsibility of present issues for the future prosperity of the world (p. 8). Educators must determine what they value and how their values are attached to standards and curriculum development. If educators focus on numerical outputs that can be displayed on graphs and spreadsheets, we may forget that these numbers represent real, diverse people.

The use of multicultural literature can uphold the standards. In a study conducted by G.E. Muhammed (2015), she decided that she valued her students becoming lifelong writers. She instructed adolescent African American girls during a summer writing institute that used African American women's writings for mentor reading. These young girls were able to explore identity and critique current racial and social phenomena, which might not have been accessible in a traditional, canonical piece of literature. Then, these girls responded and produced their own contributions to a narrative that united the African American women community (p. 10). Literature should be able to unlock voices, and the students from this study were able to find their inner voice by engaging with literature that reflected their racial identity. Ultimately, the girls from this study were also able to recognize the literary structure, form, and traits of the selected pieces by demonstrating the same skills in their own writing. Not only are they connecting and reflecting with the texts, but they are also approaching and manipulating its technical aspects. They are not reading the texts for the sake of relevancy but also learning literary standards (Muhammed p. 11). Every piece of literature has elements that students need to analyze and master, so teachers should have no fear of sacrificing the standards if they use multicultural literature. They also need to be cautious of associating standards with only

Eurocentric literature, because they are inherently placing a higher literary value on these works over multicultural literature. Still, multicultural literature can be in the same playing field as these canonical works.

Another reason that teachers hesitate to use multicultural literature is the controversial and sensitive topics that would be introduced during class discussion. As Finazzo is quick to point out for multicultural children's literature, "With multicultural education, it also encompasses recognition of racism, prejudice, discrimination, equity, and values" (1997 p. 100). Teachers may feel inept at handling these discussions, even with students at the secondary level. However, during a six-week unit that focused on identity, thirty-five students were engaged with "real-world" issues and even came to the conclusion that they needed more time in order to give justice to these conversations (Nelson-Barber & Harrison 1996 p. 261). These students were able to apply a critical pedagogy that gave them a voice to contribute in the classroom and not "require them to deny, hide, or give up identity for the sake of education" (p. 262). Even though the students had a positive response, reasonable assumption would suggest that students were misunderstood or conflicted with others. These conversations can be difficult, and a teacher needs to be prepared to facilitate, but the student's empowerment through this process should be worth more than the discomfort. As stated before, these difficult conversations must occur in a safe environment created by the teacher and reinforced by the students. Students need a peer-group that engages and challenges with differing beliefs or opinions while understanding that tensions will be handled with grace and respect (Beach, R., Thein, A. H., & Parks, D. 2008 p. 63). Students and teachers should strive to embrace each other's identities in the classroom, as well as their own.

What would ease the tension and discomfort in the classroom would be professional

support from the school, district, and government. A teacher may be absolutely willing and prepared for inclusion, but she or he may recognize that her or his efforts could be considered controversial by administrators of the community. If the teacher does not feel that she or he has full support, then she or he might avoid inclusion in order to prevent conflict (Subrahmanyam, et al 2000 p.183). However, the teacher needs to help the students learn how to resolve conflict to be ready for the workforce; and the teacher should be confident that the principal will work for her or his best interests when parents or the community oppose her or his efforts. G.C. Baker contends that while a teacher can begin the change within her or his school, the goal should be for the entire system to have a complete and comprehensive approach and advocacy for multicultural education (p. 31). One teacher's work for multicultural education would be futile if she or he is the only person addressing these issues because students will continue to move on to other classes where multicultural values are not apparent. The school administration also needs to understand that cultural inclusion is necessary for the well-being of all students. Then, the system will fully support the teacher who is following the legislation and policy that is set forth by itself.

In regards to state standards, the College and Career Readiness Standards (2015) are the current guidelines for classroom instruction for teachers in the state of Mississippi. I reviewed this document to see if the state had any specific requirements for cultural inclusion, specifically in literature. While the standards agree that a student must have an understanding of other cultures to be considered college and career ready, the standards do not provide any guidelines that require teachers to have a variety of literature that supported multiple cultural perspectives. Rather, a footnote's wording implies the inclusion as a suggestion for teachers but not a necessity. A standard for English IV requires a knowledge of eighteenth, nineteenth, and

twentieth century for literature, but a footnote is the only indication that this knowledge could expand to a variety of cultures but is not necessary for achievement (p. 57). How can a student be prepared to for a twenty-first century work environment that consists a diversity of cultures when she or he has not been exposed to differing cultural perspectives throughout her or his education?

I decided to apply this unspoken standard in my preservice practice. As an undergraduate in the School of Education, I chose to create a unit implementing multicultural literature and then teach that unit at my student teaching placement. At the conclusion of the unit, I polled my students and asked them to reflect on the degree to which their awareness of another culture had increased through our readings and discussions. This research process will expose my students to minority narratives, discuss the cultural perspectives in the texts, and evaluate my students' responses to the material and my teaching strategies. As I prepare to be a full-time teacher, I want to develop the skills and knowledge to implement multicultural literature in my future classrooms.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The purpose of this research is to evaluate my experience as a preservice teacher in the implementation of multicultural literature by analyzing the students' reactions to the proposed unit. This unit was created with the goal to expose students to multicultural perspectives. After developing the unit, I taught five classes over a period of two weeks, March 20th through the 31st, totalling fifty hours of classroom time. During this time, I recorded my personal reflections and collected classwork from my students to analyze their reading discourses and cultural engagement. I examined the students' writings to determine if the students were relying on an universalist, individualist, pluralistic, or Eurocentric interpretation of the literature. On March 31, students with parental consent were given a brief survey that questioned them on their experiences during the unit and my effectiveness in presenting the material. With the survey results, I was able to identify misconceptions and improvement areas for future development in multicultural literature implementation.

Participants and Setting

I was placed in a local North Mississippi high school to fulfill the student teaching requirement. A total of ninety-six twelfth grade students participated in the unit, with thirty-nine students providing parental consent to participate in the research project as approved by the University of Mississippi's International Board Review. Out of this group, twenty-six identified as female and thirteen identified as male, aging around seventeen to twenty years of age. This group had a mixture of advance placement and traditional route students, which provides me with a range of ability when reviewing the classwork. Even within the traditional route students, ability varies from above average to below with individualized education plans (IEP). I needed to

differentiate instruction between the traditional English IV classes and the advanced placement class in order to challenge all students to reach their full potential.

The students are from a school district that is highly ranked for Mississippi. While the school district is making great progress, it has one of the largest achievement gaps in the state with a large population of students in low socioeconomic circumstances. The high school where I am placed makes tremendous efforts in holistically supporting all of its students in academics and overall well-being. The high school is predominantly composed of African American students with Caucasians making up the next largest portion of the school population, while small numbers of Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Middle Eastern students are also present. Of the thirty-nine students that actively participated in this study, seventeen identify as African American, twenty identify as Caucasian, and two identify as other (Asian American, Hispanic, etc.).

Prior to the multicultural unit, students taking the traditional English IV class focused on research practices with minimum engagement with fictional texts. Students were only exposed to excerpts from *Beowulf*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and King Arthur folklore for literature. This sampling covers Eurocentric topics as the students learned about the medieval ages in England and the United Kingdom, subconsciously reinforcing this idea that Western Europe is the center for knowledge and literature. Unfortunately, *The Awakening* was the most contemporary literary text that these students in English IV read this semester. On the other hand, students placed in the advanced literature and composition course read several novels with varying cultural perspectives, including *Reservation Blues* and *Mudbound*. These students are accustomed to critically reading texts, but occasionally fail to provide an in-depth analysis of a text. For all five classes, I will encourage students to focus on the texts' cultural resonances and influences.

Unit Development

The Understanding by Design (UbD) format was used to create the multicultural unit. The UbD's strategy for lesson planning is to first identify standards and understandings that must be mastered by the students, determine appropriate assessments for the standards, and then create daily lesson plans that prepare students to complete those assessments to demonstrate achievement. In preparing my multicultural literature unit, I implemented portions of Baker's *Planning for Multicultural Instruction* (1983) to fit my circumstances and purposes. According to Baker, implementation is most effective when multicultural education is fully embraced throughout the school. As a student teacher, I knew my circle of control would be within the confines of my classroom, so I recognized early that I would not fully implement Baker's plan nor would I be able to accomplish all the desired goals and objectives within the limited time of my placement.

I encountered several obstacles that teachers in practice face when implementing multicultural literature. As a guest in my placement classroom, I had to collaborate with the permanent teacher in the classroom to select the material that I will be teaching the students. I also had to be conscious of the other English IV classes' pacing in the school because all senior English classes wanted to cover the same material. After reviewing the classroom's available resources, the clinical instructor suggested teaching *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin because we had access to a full classroom set of the novellas. While *The Awakening* was heralded as the first feminist novel, its potential for multicultural discussion was limited since the primary characters are members of a predominant Caucasian culture. Critique for systematic oppression would be difficult since racial discrimination is normalized in the text. Chopin's work was a social critique on womanhood and individuality at the turn of the 20th century, but the novella ultimately fails

in condemning all forms of cultural oppression in the Creole society. I decided that I wanted to highlight the minority voices of Louisiana in the late nineteenth century by selecting additional poems and short stories and focusing on silent subcultures in *The Awakening*.

To accomplish my goals for multicultural literature while meeting my placement's requirements, I chose to integrate at least two minority perspectives into the unit. Baker (1994) recommended adding minority representation to predetermined curriculum to begin implementation practice as the teacher seeks multicultural perspectives in all aspects of the course (p. 126). I chose to implement African American and Native American cultures because of the literature's location and my classroom's demographics. While Baker suggests to read children's books in order to research quickly, I searched for minority authors who were writing at the same time and place as Kate Chopin (Baker 1994 p. 124). Through these searches, I was able to identify Victor Sejour, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, and Rain C. Gomez as minority writers from Louisiana. Sejour wrote the short story "The Mulatto" (1837) as one of the first anti-slavery narratives by an African with links to the French colonialism and the United States' growing abolition movements (Daut 2010 p.4). While Dunbar-Nelson has been criticized for her lack of racial criticism in her works, recent scholarship has begun to recognize her subtle emphasis on racial ambiguity and identity in Creole Louisiana literature (Storm 2016 p. 362). Her short story "The Praline Woman" (1889) uses one free person of color's dialogue to demonstrate the tensions between various cultural groups on the New Orleans streets. Gomez is a contemporary choice: a living Louisiana Creole who recently published a poetry collection entitled *Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdad Memory*. By selecting the poem of the same name, racial and cultural discussions are brought to the present as the poet engages with her racial fluidity and pluralistic heritage.

To continue integrating multicultural perspectives through the rest of the unit, I sought to highlight the cultural position of the novella by identifying each character's social role within the story. I wanted my students to understand that this story's critique is influenced by the characters' and author's social discourses. For *The Awakening*, the social commentary is relayed to the reader through the lens of an elite, white Creole woman. Her social class, her race, and her heritage are going to influence the character Edna Pontellier's actions, and the same can be applied to other characters. I also sought to highlight the overlooked minority voices in the novella, specifically the quadroon nurses and servants. By presenting the quadroon nurses as a foil to Edna Pontellier, I could present the social system's reinforcement that is taking place in the novella's social critique. Racial pejorative are present in the novella through the context of white Creole society, and I wanted to be sensitive yet bold about these issues within its context.

When developing assignments and assessments for this unit, I wanted to conduct qualitative assessments that focused on the student engagement with the material's cultural perspectives. I used guiding questions that considered the students' reading discourses: universalist, individualistic, pluralistic and Eurocentric. For assignments like the "Story Elements" worksheet for "The Praline Woman," I assessed whether the students were consciously aware of the characters' racial identities.

Procedures

In order to use my students' work and their survey responses in my research, I sought approval from the University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Per requirement of the IRB, I obtained permission from my placement's principal to conduct research in his school. With the principal's information, I created information sheets, 18-year-old student consent forms, parental consent forms, and unit surveys to be approved by the IRB before

distributing in class. IRB reviewed the attached materials in Appendix A, and these forms were used to explain my research purpose and obtain consent from students and parents who voluntarily allow me to use the students' work and take the unit survey.

The UbD unit plan provides day-by-day descriptions of what and how I presented material and instruction to the students. After grading the classwork, I removed the data to review the discourse of students' responses who gave consent. As required by the IRB, students are not identified by name and labelled all classwork with a preassigned student identification number. I used the evaluation tool (Appendix B) as a qualitative assessment that consisted of guiding questions that directed the researcher when reviewing the student responses. Based on the students' writing, I should be able to determine if a student was reading and/or analyzing with a universalist, individualist, pluralistic, or eurocentric discourse. With this data and results from the unit survey, I will determine if the teaching strategies were effective for the implementation of multicultural literature. All classroom tasks that were evaluated for this research project are included in Appendix B.

Data Analysis

I used the "Guiding Questions for Student Responses Evaluation" Tool (Appendix B) when reviewing student classwork. The questions on this tool were developed by findings in the literature review in order to examine a student's reading discourse when engaging with multicultural literature. Below are brief descriptions of each reading discourse that the evaluation tool incorporates:

Universalist. This student will support the notion that common humanity will transcend cultural differences and will not recognize cultural differences as an important factor when analyzing literature. The notion can also be enforced when the student assumes that one member

of a cultural group is like all other members of the same cultural group.

Individualist. This student will advocate that a character has the power and agency to overcome conflict and to change her or his own circumstances. While this discourse may address cultural differences, the student is not recognizing institutional oppressions or restrictions that prevent characters from practicing personal agency.

Pluralistic. This student recognizes the duality or multiplicity of cultures in a literary text and is able to critique interactions and oppressions between cultures. The student will not resort to broad assumptions about cultural groups.

Eurocentric. This student consistently compares actions and themes from literary texts to typical European or Anglo-Saxon values. Like the universalist reading, the student is acting upon a notion that all people are the same, or the student believes that European values are the ultimate standard for living.

I also took note of any interesting statements or conclusions from the students that may not directly relate to reading discourse. Once I evaluated all student responses, I compiled the qualitative data and dictated commentary regarding the reading discourses. Based on the student data, I will be able to determine the teaching strategy's effectiveness and learning impact on the students.

Chapter 3: “Awakening” Cultural Identities in Louisiana Literature Unit

The following is the two-week, Understanding by Design unit that I created for this research. This template includes additional references, contextual information, state standards, student objectives, assessments, and daily lesson plans. This unit is a product of my literature review and methodology.

The University of Mississippi School of Education Written Unit Plan Understanding by Design (UBD)

Unit Title: “Awakening” Identity in Louisiana Literature

Grade Level: 12

Subject/Topic Areas: ENGLISH IV

Key Words: multicultural literature, Kate Chopin, Louisiana, creole, African American, Native American, freedom, oppression, feminism, civil rights

Designed By: Jenna Smiley

Length of Unit for Research: 10 Days

Brief Summary of Unit:

The United States is a country of many cultures that have unique influences across the regions. In particular, Louisiana is strongly shaped by its first peoples and immigration to form a mixture of cultures. Through literature, students will explore their own cultural identities as well as the identities of those who call Louisiana their home. Students will learn the differences of predominant and minority cultures and critique institutional systems that oppressed minority cultures in pre-and-post-Civil War era. As Edna Pontellier tries to free herself from the suppression of her individuality, students will learn about the process of her awakening as well as the social awareness of other characters in multicultural literature. Students will primarily focus on character development as they evaluate characters’ motives and beliefs in light of their cultural identities. Students will also participate in free-response writing and classroom discussion to promote dialogue with their classmates.

List and attach Print Materials/Resources:

The Awakening by Kate Chopin (1899)

Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdad Memory by Rain C. Gomez (2012)

“A Carnival Jangle” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson (1895)

“The Mulatto” by Victor Sejour (1837)

List and attach Internet Resources/Links:

Rain C. Gomez biography - www.ohoyocreole.com

Alice Dunbar Nelson biography - <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/alice-moore-dunbar-nelson>

Victor Sejour biography - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victor_S%C3%A9jour

Creating a Webquest - http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech011.shtml

Suggested Web Sources for Webquest -

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Maidas_Essay/main_introduction_onepage.html#tab2

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Louisiana-state/Cultural-life>

<https://www.interexchange.org/articles/career-training-usa/2016/02/22/louisiana-creole-culture/>

<http://www.neworleanscvb.com/visit/about/>

<http://www.knowlouisiana.org/encyclopedia>

<http://www.lsu.edu/about/culture.php>

<http://www.everyculture.com/North-America/Black-Creoles-of-Louisiana-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>

Kate Chopin biography - <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/awakening/context.html>

Padlet for Quadroon Discussion - <https://padlet.com/jlsmiley94/onronqhkdwp>

Stage 1 – Identify Desired Results

Goal: Identify overall goal (s) of the unit based on the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks or Common Core Standards.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS - ENGLISH IV

WRITING:

W.11-12.2. TEXT TYPES & PURPOSES - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.3. TEXT TYPES & PURPOSES - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

LANGUAGE:

L.11-12.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.

LITERATURE:

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.11-12.2 Determine the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a text and analyze in detail the development over the course of the text, including how details of a text interact and build on one another to shape and refine the theme(s) or central idea(s); provide an accurate summary of the text based upon this analysis.

RL.11-12.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a literary text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.11-12.9 - Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

COMPREHENSION AND COLLABORATION:

SL.11-12.1 - Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL.11-12.3 - Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

SL.11-12.4 - Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

MS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS - SOCIAL STUDIES, U.S. HISTORY

Domestic Affairs:

d. Trace the origins and development of slavery; its effects on African Americans and on the nation's political, social, religious, economic, and cultural development; and identify the strategies that were tried to both overturn and preserve it. (DOK 2)

e. Analyze the causes, key events, and consequences of the Civil War. (DOK 3)

f. Evaluate and examine the Reconstruction Era (using primary and secondary sources such as political cartoons, documents, letters, etc.). (DOK 3)

Culture:

6. Understand the purposes and principles embodied in the ideals and values of American society.

a. Evaluate the value and the challenge of diversity in American life. (DOK 3)

b. Assess the importance of certain character traits in a democracy, such as civility, nationalism, **freedom, authority, justice, equality, responsibility**, etc. (DOK 3)

c. Examine how American society has been influenced culturally by exploration, immigration, colonization, sectionalism, religious and social movements, etc. (DOK 3)

What understandings are desired?

1. Our varying social and cultural positions affect our daily livelihood as we contribute to society and interact with other people within and outside our cultural spheres.
2. Literature is a reflection of history and culture, and we must engage with texts from varying perspectives in order to form a complete image of society.
3. People throughout history have been marginalized by institutions in place in our society, and we must be able to recognize injustice and empower all citizens.

Daily Objectives

The students will:

1. Identify multiple uses of the word ‘creole’ in Louisiana culture. (DOK 1)
2. Recall information from the text in journal entries. (DOK 1)
3. Summarize character’s experiences in a text. (DOK 2)
4. Compare multiple definitions and uses of the word ‘creole.’ (DOK 2)
5. Compare various cultural expressions [language, music, food, religion, etc.] in New Orleans. (DOK 2)
6. Collect and display information about different cultures in New Orleans, LA. (DOK 2)
7. Listen and respect others’ ideas and opinions. (DOK 2)
8. Summarize a character’s actions and experiences in a text. (DOK 2)
9. Infer a character’s motivations based on evidence in the text. (DOK 2)
10. Make observations of the text and write in daily journals. (DOK 2)
11. Predict major ideas and events of the text based on title and book cover. (DOK 2)
12. Make observations of the text. (DOK 2)
13. Cite page numbers from the text. (DOK 2)
14. Draw conclusions of the text based on textual evidence and reader’s observations. (DOK 3)
15. Create a poem describing his/her personal culture. (DOK 4)
16. Create a scene from the quadroon’s perspective. (DOK 4)

Stage 2 – Planning Assessment

Performance Task(s):

- 1) My Cultural Memory Poem
- 2) A Jangle Through New Orleans Webquest
- 3) The Mulatto Character Tracker
- 4) The Awakening Character Sketches
- 5) Quadroon Scene Rewrites

Test/Quiz Item(s) and Other Traditional Assessments:

- 1) Journal Entries
- 2) Unit Survey

Guiding Questions for Assignment and Survey Evaluations:

- 1) Is the student appealing to a universalist approach?

- Is the student depending on relatability for an understanding of the text?
- Is the student dealing in moral absolutes? Or identifying historical norms?

2) Is the student appealing to an individualist approach?

- Who is at fault? The individual or system?
- Is the student recognizing institutional or systematic influences in the text?
- How are the students explaining the character's actions?

3) Is the student recognizing a pluralistic approach?

- Connecting cultures with shaping identities?
- Is the student taking into account the historical context in the response?
- Is the student differentiating between the predominant culture and subculture?

4) Which discourses are the students critiquing?

- What discourses are students overlooking?
- Are the students recognizing Eurocentric approaches?

Informal Check(s):

- 1) Classroom discussions on various topics.
- 2) Daily journal entries by students.
- 3) Completed work assignments.

Academic Prompt(s):

- 1) How does your personal culture affect your identity?
- 2) Why is New Orleans called the Creole City? How has it become the home for a variety of cultures?
- 3) How is racial identity defined and complicated in post-Civil War Louisiana?
- 4) How is Edna Pontellier's awakening affected by her cultural and gender identity?

Stage 3 – Daily Lesson Plans

Make a calendar to outline the objectives taught each day, the activities/strategies used and the assessments used. Next, attach a separate lesson plan for each day of your unit using the format on the following page.

STAGE 3: Daily Plans				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Introduction to Louisiana and Creoles “Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdead Memory” by Rain C. Gomez Affirmation of Personal Culture Poetry Activity	Finish Poetry Activity Sharing Time	“Carnival Jangle” by Alice Dunbar Nelson Explore Louisiana Webquest Activity	“The Mulatto” by Victor Sejour Character Reading Tracker	“The Mulatto” Character Reading Tracker and Discussion
WEEK TWO: CHAPTERS I-X/CHARACTERS				
Introduction to <i>The Awakening</i> Chapters 1-3, IN CLASS Chapters 4-5, FOR HOMEWORK AP: CHAPTERS 1-14 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	Character Sketches Chapters 6-7, FOR HOMEWORK PRESENT AND LEAD DISCUSSION	Character Sketch Discussion Chapters 8-9, FOR HOMEWORK PRESENT AND LEAD DISCUSSION	Quadron Discussion *Rewrite a scene from <i>The Awakening</i> in the quadron’s perspective Chapter 10-11, FOR HOMEWORK QUADROON DISCUSSION	Unit Survey Chapters 12-14, FOR HOMEWORK UNIT SURVEY MULATTO ESSAY REVIEW

Daily Lesson Plans

DAY 1

Objectives:

1. Identify multiple uses of the word ‘creole’ in Louisiana culture. (DOK 1)
2. Infer ideas and themes from Gomez’s poem. (DOK 2)
3. Create a poem describing his/her personal culture. (DOK 4)

Materials:

“Louisiana Creole” Powerpoint
 Rain C. Gomez’s *Smoked Mullet Crawdad Cornbread Memory*
 Paper
 Pens/Pencils

Opening (5 Minutes):

1. Explain to the class that I will be teaching them a unit on cultural identity. We will cover several poems and short stories as well as read Kate Chopin’s novella *The Awakening*.

2. All of our literature for this unit is set in Louisiana. For this week, we will focus on various cultural groups that are found in Louisiana in order to provide us with a historical and cultural context. Ask the students what they already know about the people who live in Louisiana. Since we are in Mississippi, students may have originated from the state or taken visits.
3. Ask the students if they have ever heard of the term ‘creole’ before. Explain to the students that today they will learn about the various uses of the word ‘creole’ and then hear a poem written by a Creole.

Learning Tasks (40 minutes):

1. Display the “Louisiana Creole” powerpoint on the television screen. *Lecture through powerpoint and answer students’ questions along the way. **(15 minutes)**
2. At the conclusion of the powerpoint, pass out copies of Rain C. Gomez’s poem “Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdad Memory.” Give students some brief background on Rain C. Gomez:

Rain C. Gomez was born in Louisiana to parents of multiracial heritage, including Louisiana Creole, Choctaw-Biloxi/Creek, Canadian Metis, and Celtic American. She grew up with an appreciation for all of her family’s cultures and traditions. While her family was poor for the majority of her childhood, Gomez was rich in her cultural heritage, even though others might not have agreed. Now, Gomez is a poet and holds a doctorate in Cultural and Ethnic Studies. She currently lives in California and teaches American Indian Studies at San Francisco State University.

3. Ask students: What can you infer from the title and dedication?
4. Tell the students to underline words and phrases that resonate with them as the teacher reads the poem out loud to the class. **(10 minutes)**
5. At the conclusion of the reading, explain to the students that this poem describes Gomez’s culture. Explain to students that Gomez is comparing herself, her people, and her heritage to her environment. Ask the students to point out where Gomez is appealing to her multi-ethnic heritage. Tell the students to be specific by citing certain words/phrases.
6. During the discussion, the teacher or a volunteer should record the keywords and phrases on the board. Once the class has produced a bank of words, instruct the students to use the words write their own poems about their origins and cultures. The poem does not require any particular rhyme scheme, rhythm, length, etc., but it needs to address the following questions that are gleaned from Gomez’s poem:
 - a. What is your race/ethnicity?
 - b. Where are you from?
 - c. What does your home look like?
 - d. What kind of food do you eat?
 - e. What are your hobbies or interests?
 - f. Who is in your family?
 - g. What is your family’s history?
 - h. What does the present/future hold for you?

Inform the students that not all questions have to be answered in the poem. They are just guidelines to help the students think about their culture. Encourage them to be creative!
(10 minutes)

7. Students will use the remaining class time to brainstorm and compose their poems.

Closure (5 minutes):

1. Remind students that they will continue to discuss creoles for the rest of the unit, so they need to save any of their notes.
2. Tell the students that they will have class time tomorrow to complete their poems and inform them that they will be sharing their poems with the rest of the class.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: Students should try to answer all of the questions gleaned from Gomez's poem.

Intervention: Students may need support in selecting words/phrases for their poems and brainstorming ideas. Students may want to copy Gomez's poem structure in order to write their own poems.

Accommodation (Students in Special Education with IEP): Students may need a fill in the blank poem in order to complete the assignment.

DAY 2

Objectives:

1. Create a poem describing his/her personal culture. (DOK 4)
2. Listen to and respect others' ideas and opinions. (DOK 2)

Materials:

Copies of Gomez's poem

Paper

Pens/Pencils

Opening (5 minutes):

1. Remind students about the definitions of 'creole' that were discussed yesterday and the major ideas that Gomez addressed in her poem as a Louisiana Creole.
2. Tell students that they will spend most of the class period composing their poems about their personal cultures. Their poems should address most, if not all, of the questions that were gleaned from Gomez's poem. Remind them that they will be sharing their poems with the rest of the class.

Learning Tasks (40 minutes):

1. Students will use **30 minutes** of the class period to finish their poems. The teacher will walk around the classroom and assist students in writing their poems. Students should use all of this time.
2. For the remainder of the class time, each student will take turns reading his/her poem out loud. Before they begin to read, tell the students that no comments should be made in between readings in order not to show favoritism or disrespect any of their classmates. This will also help for everyone to have a chance to read before the end of class.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Use as much of the remaining class time as possible for the students' readings.
2. At the end of class, students should turn in their completed poems. Make a note of who was not able to share their poems in class, so they can share on the next day.

*In the case that the poetry sharing finishes early, the teacher can begin introducing the next day's content.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: Students should try to answer all of the questions gleaned from Gomez's poem.

Intervention: Students may need support in selecting words/phrases for their poems and brainstorming ideas. Students may want to copy Gomez's poem structure in order to write their own poems.

Accommodation: Students may need a fill in the blank poem to complete the assignment. Students may need someone else to read their poem for them

DAY 3**Objectives:**

1. Collect and display information about different cultures in New Orleans, LA. (DOK 2)
2. Compare various cultural expressions [language, music, food, religion, etc.] in New Orleans. (DOK 2)

Materials:

Alice Dunbar Nelson's "A Carnival Jangle"

"A Jangle through New Orleans" Webquest sheet

Opening (10 minutes):

1. Ask students who did not have the opportunity to share yesterday to do so at the beginning of class.
2. Remind students that each person is an individual within her or his cultural group, but his/her personal experience gives others the opportunity to learn about the individual experience as well as the cultural group as a whole.
3. Today, students will move their focus from their personal cultures to the specific cultures found in New Orleans, Louisiana. Tell the class that you will read to them a short story about Carnival/Mardi Gras in New Orleans by Alice Dunbar-Nelson. Give students a brief introduction to Dunbar-Nelson's background:

Alice Moore Dunbar-Nelson was born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1875. With mixed-race parents, her heritage consisted of African American, Anglo, Native American, and Creole, which contributed to her understandings of race, ethnicity, and gender in New Orleans [like Rain C. Gomez]. Her first book, a collection of short stories with a piece that we are reading today, was published in 1895. Her work portrays the complicated reality for African American women, addressing racism, oppression, family, and sexuality. She married three different times over her lifetime.

4. Ask the students for their first impressions of Alice Dunbar-Nelson.
5. Read, “A Carnival Jangle” aloud to the class.
6. Ask, “What kind of people do you think Alice Dunbar Nelson was writing about in her short story?” Tell the students that they will continue to explore the different people that live in New Orleans in today’s activity.

Learning Tasks (35 minutes):

1. Pass out the “A Jangle through New Orleans” Webquest worksheet. Explain the directions to the students: The student is touring the New Orleans streets and comes across several scenarios. The student will use the computer to look up the provided websites and other Internet sources to answer the questions on the quest. The student should try to find out as much as possible regarding the topics. There is *not* one correct answer for these questions [which will be discussed why later]. More points will be given to whole answers in complete sentences.
2. With ten minutes remaining in class, ask students to share some of their answers for the questions. When one student shares, ask if anyone else has different answers for the same question. Fill in anything that might have been missed during the quest [for example, if students mostly identified Catholicism as the major religion, tell the students that voodoo, an African religion is also popular] Continue discussing the answers until all topics are covered.

Closure (5 minutes):

1. When the class discussion is coming to a close, ask the students, “What kind of people do you think are mostly associated with your answers?” Many of the answers might have reflect the predominant French, Catholic culture of New Orleans. OR their answers might have great variety that attests to the city’s diversity.
2. Explain to students the differences between the predominant culture and a minority culture. French and Catholicism are characteristics of the predominant culture that is practiced by the majority of the population while a minority culture differs from the dominant.
3. Tell students that tomorrow that they will continue to discuss about predominant and minority cultures in class the next day.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: Student would find information on several different cultures for each category.

Intervention: Student will need to stick with the provided websites in order to find all the information.

Accommodation: Student will need to use one internet site or be provided a compiled document that contains all the information needed to answer the questions.

DAY 4

Objectives:

1. Summarize a character’s actions and experiences in a text. (DOK 2)

2. Infer a character's motivations based on evidence in the text. (DOK 2)

Materials:

Copies of "The Mulatto" by Victor Sejour
"Mulatto" Character Reading Worksheet
Pencils/Pens

Opening (5 minutes):

- Explain to students that to continue their studies in the various cultures of New Orleans, the class will read "The Mulatto" by Victor Sejour.
- Give brief background context on Victor Sejour:

Juan Victor Sejour was born in New Orleans on June 2, 1817. His father Francois Marcou was a free mulatto and his mother Eloisa was a New Orleans quadroon. With wealthy parents, Sejour attended private school and moved to Paris at the age of nineteen for education and work. "The Mulatto" was his first work and published in French in 1837. This work would not be translated in English until the late 20th century but was one of the first critiques of slavery by an African American.

- Ask the students why they think Sejour's work was not popular in the Americas? Inform the students that slavery was still an institution at the time of its publication.

Learning Tasks (40 minutes):

- Pass out the copies of "The Mulatto" to the students or have electronic copies available on their computers. Tell the students that a mulatto is someone who is half white descent and half black descent. Explain to the students that during pre-Civil War, Louisiana had a complicated tiered-racial system that was based on a person's 'blood' or family tree. Tell the students to keep this in mind as they read the story.
- Read Section I out loud to the entire class. Explain to the students that it begins with a 'frame story,' a story that contains another story. Ask the students if they have any questions about Section I.
- The students should be in pairs. Inform the students that in each pair, one person will take on the persona of the character Alfred and the second partner will take on the persona of Georges. The pairs should read the stories together, either alternating by page numbers or paragraphs. While they are reading, the students should underline or highlight whenever their character's thoughts or feelings are evident.
- Tell the student that at the end of each section, they will discuss the story up to that point with their partners as the characters. When they are done discussing, they will record their character's thoughts and feelings in the appropriate sections. The students will repeat this exercise until they have read the entire story.
- The students will work on these character readings until the end of the class period. The teacher should be assisting students and answer their questions about the story.

Closing (5 minutes):

- Tell the students when they have five minutes left and that will need to find a stopping point in their reading and discussion. Tell them that they should be close or at the end of Section III.
- The students will have time in class to finish their work in class tomorrow. For the rest of

the class period, discuss the characters and events up to the point that the students have read.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: The student will predict how the frame story would have ended since it is not clear in the text. The student may also discuss the connection between Alfred and Georges.

Intervention: The student will write brief summaries on each section to demonstrate comprehension.

Accommodation: The student will answer guided questions about the short story.

DAY 5

Objectives:

1. Summarize a character’s actions and experiences in a text. (DOK 2)
2. Infer a character’s motivations based on evidence in the text. (DOK 2)

Materials:

Copies of “The Mulatto” by Victor Sejour

“Mulatto” Character Reading Worksheet

Pencils/pens

Nameplates

Opening (5 minutes):

- Remind the students what a ‘mulatto’ is and explain how this is an important factor in the story. Be sure that the students have comprehended that the mulatto is Georges, but he does not know who his father is, even though the reader should be able to infer that it’s Alfred.
- Tell the students that they will have twenty-five minutes to finish their reading and worksheet, and they will have a whole class discussion at the end.

Learning Tasks (40 minutes):

- Students should finish their readings and work on “The Mulatto.” The teacher should be answering the students’ questions and tracking how far the students have read.
- Give the students a five-minute warning before twenty-five minutes have expired.
- When time is up, tell the students that they will discuss their thoughts and inferences to the rest of the class. Tell them that this is a discussion, so they should listen and talk with each other. Each pair should contribute something to the conversation. Until their group shares, the nameplates on their desk should be showing the “I have something to say” side. Once a pair has spoken, they can turn their nameplates over. This will help the teacher keep track of who is participating in the discussion.
- Students should discuss not only the major plot points, but the teacher should guide the conversation to include the definition and complexity of race in the short story. Students should decide what the ending of the short story means as Alfred’s family-line is now destroyed by Georges. Students should also critique the institutional system of slavery and discuss whether or not Alfred was morally-sound in his decision making, depending on the standard that is held against him. Students should also discuss whether Georges

- was a total victim of the system or if he was able to fight against the oppression.
- The class discussion should take the rest of the class time.

Closing (5 minutes):

- Wrap up the discussion on “The Mulatto.” Be sure that every group has had the opportunity to contribute to the conversation.
- Tell the students that they will begin reading *The Awakening*, a novella about a French Creole woman in New Orleans, next week. The readings that they completed this week should help them understand the full context of New Orleans society in *The Awakening*.
- Students will turn in their character reading worksheets at the end of class.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: The student will discuss the complexities of racial identity in “The Mulatto” by sharing their thoughts on the ending with the rest of the class.

Intervention: The student may need a lead-in question from the teacher in order to contribute to the conversation.

Accommodation: The student will briefly summarize the story at the beginning of the discussion in order to contribute to the conversation.

DAY 6

Objectives:

1. Predict major ideas and events of the text based on title and book cover. (DOK 2)
2. Make observations of the text. (DOK 2)
3. Cite page numbers from the text. (DOK 2)

Materials:

Copies of *The Awakening*, by Kate Chopin

Paper

Pencils/Pens

Opening (5-10 minutes):

1. Welcome students back to class and give a recap of what was covered last week. They read poetry and short stories by minority writers from New Orleans, two of which were writing at the same time as the author who wrote the novella that they will be reading. Ask the students why they think they read those pieces before the novella. Explain to students that these minority authors have been overlooked because they were marginalized during the 19th century, meaning that there were institutions (slavery, Jim Crow laws) in place that prevented their work from being popular. Tell them that they should keep these stories and writers in mind as they read *The Awakening*.
2. Give the students some background information about Kate Chopin:
Kate Chopin was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1850. She attended a Catholic boarding school throughout her childhood and excelled in French and English. In 1870, Kate married Oscar Chopin who was a member of a prominent Creole family in New Orleans where her family lived for nine years. Kate led an unconventional lifestyle for women at that time but was deeply admired and supported by her husband. Chopin began writing fiction in 1889, publishing

her second novel *The Awakening* in 1899. She is remembered for her ‘local color’ writing, depicting the New Orleans lifestyle, and participating in the early movement of feminism.

3. Ask students that according to Louisiana’s answer social system, how would they define Kate? Explain that she married into a French Creole family but would have still been considered an outside since she was not originally from Louisiana.

Learning Tasks (35 minutes):

1. Pass out the copies of *The Awakening*. First, ask the students what they think the book might be about based on the title. Discuss all the connotation and denotations for the word ‘awakening.’
2. Next, ask students about their first impressions of the book cover. What do they think the book will be about based on the cover. Affirm their predictions and assist in generating ideas.
3. To introduce the novella, read Chapters 1-2 aloud in class. Tell the students to take note of the characters’ names, the setting, and the actions in the first scene. At the end of the reading, ask the students to share what they have written down or highlighted. Discuss that the the novella opens “*in medias res*,” meaning in the middle of everything: the Pontelliers are already at the beach house, minding their business in the middle of the day
Characters: Leonce, Edna, Robert, the children, the quadroon, Farival twins, women in

black

Setting: beachhouse, Grand Isle

Actions: parrots squawking, Farival twins playing piano, children playing, Madame Lebrun ordering her servants, Edna and Robert returning from the beach, Robert scolding Edna

4. Tell the students to read Chapter 3 silently to themselves. Once they are done reading, they should select one part of the text that they think is the most important part of the first chapters of the novella. It could be dialogue, a character description, or exposition/information provided by the narrator.
5. Once they have selected a passage, they should briefly write why they thought that particular passage was important: What is the author trying to tell us in the first few pages? Is this a happy family? Is there trouble brewing? How are the people treating each other? What is happening in the background?
6. After reading and answering what they gained from the text, partners will swap papers with each other and read the passage that their partner chose and their thoughts on it. Then, the partner will add his/her own thoughts about why the passage is important. Finally, partners will return their papers, read what their partner added, and draw a new conclusion about the passage’s importance.

Closing (5 minutes):

1. Students should wrap-up their dialectic journals. If time allows, students can share their findings with the rest of the class.
2. Tell students that their homework will be to read Chapter 4-5 and be prepared to write a journal in the first ten minutes in class the next day. Tell them that their reading checks will be in-class journal entries everyday for a quiz grade (3 total).

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: The student will identify several passages in the text that all contribute to

one particular idea development and then draw conclusions on the text.

Intervention: Several passages will be suggested to the student in order for him/her to choose one and discuss the idea development.

Accommodation: A passage will be chosen for the student to explain why it is important to the rest of the text.

DAY 7

Objectives:

1. Make observations of the text. (DOK 2)
2. Cite page numbers from the text. (DOK 2)
3. Draw conclusions of the text based on textual evidence and reader's observations. (DOK 3)

Materials:

The Awakening

Paper/Journals

Character Sketch Worksheet

Opening (15 minutes):

- Students will come into class and have two minutes to discuss what they read with their partner. After two minutes, the journal prompt will be displayed on the screen, and the students will have ten minutes to compose an answer to the prompt. The rubric is attached, but the teacher should primarily look for content and idea development in their entries. Students may use their books to construct their answers.
- Journal Question: "In short, Mrs. Pontellier was not a mother-woman," (Chopin 8). Is this statement true? Write 4-5 sentences explaining why or why not, using evidence from the text.

Learning Tasks (30 minutes):

- Once students have completed their journal entries, discuss their answers to their question. Be sure to point out what standard of motherhood that they are using. At this time, the society and culture decided what was expected of a woman as a mother. Adele Ratignolle represents ideal motherhood while Edna goes against the grain. Also point out that the quadroon is the primary caretaker for the children.
- After the discussion, pass out the character sketch worksheets. Tell students that they will choose from the following characters: Edna, Leonce, Robert, and Adele. First, the student will identify the character's social position in the novella. Then, they will fill out the worksheet based on textual evidence and the character's social position about their description, traits, thoughts, feelings, actions, and goals. Explain to them that the goal will probably be the most difficult because the answer will not be obvious in the text. Student should begin to recognize how the character's social position affects their thoughts and actions.
- Students will use the remaining class time to analyze their chosen characters. They might have to reread the past chapters. Students must also cite the pages where they are getting their information.

- There should be equal numbers of students who analyzing Edna, Leonce, Robert, and Adele, respectively. Tomorrow, these students will split into groups with a representative for each character to continue their analyses.

Closing (5 minutes):

- Students will work on their character sketches for the remaining class time. Remind students that they must read Chapters 6-7 for homework, and will answer another journal prompt in class tomorrow.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: The student will focus on the Creole social class as a whole and determine the characteristics and traits expected of the male and female characters.

Intervention: The student may need recommendations for passages to look at for their chosen character.

Accommodation: The student will focus on a selection of pages instead of all seven chapters. The student may also answer only a portion of the categories on the worksheet.

DAY 8

Objectives:

1. Make observations of the text. (DOK 2)
2. Cite page numbers from the text. (DOK 2)
3. Draw conclusions of the text based on textual evidence and reader’s observations. (DOK 3)

Materials:

The Awakening
 Paper/Journals
 Character Sketch Worksheet

Opening (15 minutes):

- Students will come into class and have two minutes to discuss what they read with their partner. After two minutes, the journal prompt will be displayed on the screen, and the students will have ten minutes to compose an answer to the prompt. The rubric is attached, but the teacher should primarily look for content and idea development in their entries. Students may use their books to construct their answers.
- Journal Question: “A certain light was beginning to dawn dimly within her, - the light which, showing the way, forbids it” (Chopin 13). What is the light? Discuss what is causing this light to dawn within Edna in 4-5 sentences.

Learning Tasks (30 minutes):

- Once students have completed their journal entries, ask for students to share some of their answers with the class. Discuss that the light is the beginning of Edna’s awakening, connecting it to the title of the novel. Discuss what Edna’s awakening is about, and how she feels toward Robert. Is their relationship innocent or not?
- The students will have 10-15 minutes to finish Part I of the Character Sketch. Remind

them that they need to consider how the social position affects the character.

- Once students have completed Part I, students will form groups that consist of each character: Edna, Leonce, Robert, and Adele. Students should discuss why these characters would be in conflict with another. For example, Leonce might be in conflict with Edna because she is not fulfilling her motherly duty according to his standards. The group should select two pairings and record their discussion in the second worksheet.
- Students will use the remaining class time to complete the second part of the Character Sketch. Students should consider the relationships between the characters' social positions and how their positions cause conflict with one another.

Closing (5 minutes):

- Students will use the rest of the class time to finish the Character Sketch worksheets. Further discussion might be needed to take place on the next day.
- Remind students that their homework is to read Chapters 8-9 for homework. The journal entry for the next day might be voided in order to have discussion on the Character Sketches.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: After analyzing the Creole social class as a whole, the student might also want to explore how this particular social class differs from the rest of American society. For example, Creoles are more openly honest compared to Edna, as described in the text.

Intervention: The student might need to be shown a particular scene between two characters from the text in order to determine the social conflicts.

Accommodation: The student may need to only focus on one pairing of characters in order to determine the conflicts between them. The student might also need to simply identify the characters' problems before determining how they are related to other characters.

DAY 9

Objectives:

1. Summarize a character's actions and experiences in a text. (DOK 2)
2. Infer a character's motivations based on evidence in the text. (DOK 2)
3. Create a scene from the quadroon's perspective. (DOK 4)

Materials:

The Awakening

Quadroon Quotes Padlet

Paper/Journals

Pencils/Pens

Opening (15 minutes):

- If students still need to discuss and complete Part II of the Character Sketch from the day before, then they should be given the time as they would have for a journal prompt to finish their work. If students were able to finish, then the protocol for the journal entries should be followed.
- Journal Question: "You are the only one worth playing for. The others? Bah!" (Chopin

26). What does Mademoiselle Reisz mean by this? How is Edna different from the other party-goers?

Learning Tasks (30 minutes):

- Once students have completed their Character Sketches or journals, take some time for discussion. Tell the students that the characters have conflicts with each other because of their differing goals and values, which are affected by their social position. However, be sure that the students recognize that all these characters are in the same social class, even though they are primarily separated as men and women. For the journal entry, discuss how Edna feels like an outsider in the Creole society and how she is affected by Mademoiselle Reisz's music.
- The students should be familiar with the Creole society at this point and how it dictates Edna and the other characters' lives. Now, the students will discuss how Edna's social class oppresses minority cultures due to its complicated social system intertwined with race relations.
- Remind the students about the minority cultures that were discussed in the previous week. Ask the students where they have seen these cultures in *The Awakening* so far. The novella takes place during a time period when African Americans were institutionally marginalized, so they may not have noticed when these characters are mentioned in the text. Bring the students' attention to the quadroon nurses. A quadroon is someone who is one-fourth black descent. Ask the students to find any reference to the quadroon nurses in the first nine chapters and to contribute their findings on a padlet. Students will use the following link to access the program: <https://padlet.com/jlsmiley94/onronqhkdwip>.
- The students should share the page numbers with the rest of the students. If students are having trouble finding all of the references, the teacher should suggest page numbers for students to turn to and find the quadroons in the scenes. Once all the quotes are displayed on the padlet on the screen, ask the students to read the quotes and find the similarities among the quotes. The teacher should identify the following similarities if the students miss them:
 - a. the use of "following"
 - b. the caring for white children
 - c. criticism of the nurses by Creoles
 - d. nurses working while Creoles playing
- Discuss how the similarities describe the social oppression forced upon the quadroons in the Creole society. Point out how the quadroons do not have dialogue: they are silent, distanced figures in the novella. Also, their work - cleaning, cooking, nursing - allows for the upper white Creole society to use their time for their leisure. Point out that the quadroons are mostly white descent but do not share the same privileges as the white class. As readers, we do not know that much about the quadroons, but their oppression is strongly depicted in Chopin's writing.
- Since Chopin is not entirely focused on the quadroons, the students will rewrite a scene from the novella from the quadroon's perspective. The students should determine what the quadroons' thoughts and feelings would be in these scenarios based on their knowledge from the text.
- The students will spend the rest of class time working on their quadroon scenes.

Closure (5 minutes):

- Students will use the remaining time on the quadroon scenes.
- Remind students that their homework is to read Chapter 10-11 and to be prepared to write a journal prompt at the beginning of the next class.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: After rewriting a scene, the student will need to contrast the new scene with the original scene from the text and decide if the reader gains any new knowledge with the rewrite.

Intervention: The student might need a particular idea provided to him/her in order to begin writing a scene. For example, the teacher might need to tell the student to describe how the quadroon feels about caring for the white Creole children in order to start writing.

Accommodation: The student will be assigned a scene OR need to be provided questions about the text and must answer them from the quadroon's perspective.

DAY 10**Objectives:**

1. Summarize a character's actions and experiences in a text. (DOK 2)
2. Infer a character's motivations based on evidence in the text. (DOK 2)
3. Create a scene from the quadroon's perspective. (DOK 4)

Materials:

The Awakening
Quadroon Scenes
Paper/Journals
Pencils/Pens

Opening (10 minutes):

- When students are settled, they should use 10-15 minutes of class time to finish their quadroon rewrites and turn in. More time can be allotted if needed, but enough time must be reserved for the Unit Survey. The teacher will refer to the attached rubric when reviewing these rewrites, evaluating for comprehension of the text as well as recognition of institutional oppression.

Learning Tasks (30 minutes):

- When students are ready, the following protocol should be followed for the administration of the Unit Survey. This survey is necessary for the teacher's honors thesis:
 - Everything should be cleared from the students' desks. Only students who have volunteered and have parental consent will be allowed to take this survey. Students still have the opportunity to withdrawal from the survey. Students who will not be participating should be reading the next assigned chapters of *The Awakening*.
 - Administer the Unit Surveys. This survey consists questions regarding the students' experiences with the unit and multicultural literature. The final question

asks for the students to consider the cultural elements of the characters discussed. The attached rubric will be used by the teacher to review the answers. This survey will not be used for a grade.

- Students should NOT write their names of the surveys. They must remain anonymous. All survey should be returned when completed.
- For remaining class time, students will either answer the following journal prompt or continue to read the assigned chapters of *The Awakening*, depending on time constraints.
- Journal Question: “[Edna] perceived that her will had blazed up, stubborn and resistant. She could not at that moment have done other than denied and resisted” (31). Edna behaves very differently at this point. Describe what has occurred and caused this change in 4-5 sentences.

Closure (10 minutes):

- It is important that all surveys are completed and collected by the end of the class period.
- Remind students that they must have Chapters 12-13 read for homework over the weekend.

Differentiated Instruction:

Enrichment: After rewriting a scene, the student will need to contrast the new scene with the original scene from the text and decide if the reader gains any new knowledge with the rewrite.

Intervention: The student might need a particular idea provided to him/her in order to begin writing a scene. For example, the teacher might need to tell the student to describe how the quadroon feels about caring for the white Creole children in order to start writing.

Accommodation: The student will be assigned a scene OR need to be provided questions about the text and must answer them from the quadroon’s perspective.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

I collected student responses for each classroom assignment. Upon receiving these samples, I assessed for student's understandings of and interactions with diverse perspectives.

Pre-Test

At the beginning of the unit, students were given a multicultural pre-test. This pre-test provided the opportunity to assess whether or not students were able to identify cultural elements, the historical context, and the conflicts in literature. By identifying these aspects, I was able to determine what kind of discourse the students were using as they read a piece of literature. Since this was a pre-assignment, I was also able to see what students already knew about Louisiana and how they read literature without any instruction for me. I chose "The Praline Woman" by Alice Dunbar-Nelson as the text for the pre-test. When I administered this pre-test, I read the introduction and the short story out loud in class. The introduction gave them some basic contextual information that they could use in their answers, and I wanted to be sure that everyone had an opportunity to understand the story. As can be expected, I received a variety of answers.

Question 1: What cultural elements did you find in the story? To get a sense of what students thought of when addressing culture, the first question asked students to identify cultural elements in the story. I primarily looked to see if the student was able to correctly identify the race of the story's primary speaker who is an African American creole woman based on the lines "[my daughter's] hands' so small, ma'amzelle, like you's, but brown" (par. 4). From the responses, two students identified the character as African, and three students said African American. I can assume that the students were unable to make the inference of the character's

race based on the provided evidence. A handful of students identified the character as Asian, which most likely resulted from how I read the piece, even though I intentionally avoided to mimic an accent but wanted the students to hear the dialect, paired with the stereotype of Asian sellers. The majority of the students did not comment on the character's race but many were able to correctly identify the French influence in the piece. With these responses, I wonder if my students imagine black individuals as being French or mostly consider a French dialect as a eurocentric characteristic. This question also warranted few responses regarding the Indian squaw that is featured in the text, leading me to believe that the students focused on the predominant French culture with little regard to the subcultures that were present.

Question #2: What is the historical context of this story? Even with the clues in the introduction, very few students were able to correctly identify the historical context in the story. Their answers varied from colonial exploration, to antebellum era, and even into the late twentieth century. Many students referenced the war mentioned in the sixth paragraph and tried to identify which war the speaker could be alluding to. Most were able to correctly identify the Civil War with the Yankee reference, but they could not decide whether or not the story was taking place before or after. I think the story itself is not very clear on its orientation with the war, but I think the reader can assume that it took place towards the end or following the war's conclusion. Still, even if the students were able to identify the Civil War, they did not make an effort to connect the historical event to the text. In addition, very few students provided a setting for the text, so I wonder if students are able to connect a location's historical influence to literature. Two students, however, referred to institutional oppression in their responses by discussing a time when different groups of people were treated differently and a time when slaves were free but had no access to education. Not only did these students infer the time period

of the text, but they also connected the time period's events to the actions in the text.

Question #3: Can you find any conflicts in the story? What are they? I knew that the third question would be tricky because the story has no direct conflict, but Nelson is highlighting different tensions between people groups in the text. A handful of students concluded that the text had no conflicts while the majority of students either identified the conflict as death experienced by the characters or the dilemma between the praline woman trying to sell her products to the people that she encounters. With the struggle to sell pralines, students could possibly begin to recognize the social class differences between the praline woman and the street walkers, but none of the students wrote this in their responses. Overall, the students were not recognizing inner socio/cultural relationships that existed in the text, which can be inferred by the praline woman's comments about the Yankee outsider and the Indian woman, as well as how the praline woman might relate to the other customers. In order to understand the conflicts in the rest of the unit's literature, the students need an understanding about the characters' social and racial positions and how these positions affect characters' relations with each other.

Cultural Memory Poem

The first assignment I gave to my classes was to write a poem about her or his personal culture. We first read the poem "Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdad Memory" in class and discussed the poet's mixed heritage as a Louisiana creole and how she highlighted that mixture in her poem. I created this assignment to give my students the opportunity to affirm their own cultural identities. With this assignment, students were able to share about how their cultural backgrounds are largely unknown or how their cultural background helped define them today. I have included some of the poems that touched on major cultural ideas.

Student 687172

Born and raised in Oxford MS.
I live on land that my great, great, great
grandfather once owned.
My favorite food is Mexican
but I'm not Mexican
My family is a mixture of
white, black, and Native American
I don't know much about my
mother side but my father's
dad is white and black and
his mother is Native American
and black.
My great grandmother was
raped by a white man who owned her.

In the above poem, the student is using common words and themes from Gomez's poem to discuss their personal culture. Like Gomez, the student is taking pride in her or his mixed heritage while recognizing past institutional injustices against her or his ancestors, such as forced removal and slavery.

Student 775521

Maybe I'll get the answers that I was hoping I wouldn't get.
Curiosity is a good thing, but it might not always be the best thing.
Sometimes it can hurt when you discover the answer to your question.
What if Curiosity didn't kill the cat? Perhaps the Cat really killed the curiosity.
But that's the thing about knowledge.
We can't ever completely choose what we will know and find out.
We can't ever choose what's gonna be true, and what's not gonna be true.
And once we find out, it can't go back to being a secret or something unknown to us.

The funny thing about curiosity and memory is that it's one of the things that we can actually control.
We can block out bad experiences or somehow alter it in our minds to make it seem better/happier.
We can wonder whatever.
We can even look into whatever.
I just wish I could say the same about knowledge.

This excerpt from a student's poem deals with the complexity of knowledge by

discussing its potential for closure but the danger of knowing what was not desired to be known. While this student does not explicitly address his/her culture, the student poses truth as something that cannot be controlled, resorting to an idea that people are subject to forces beyond themselves while also maintaining a sense of agency.

Student 758060

Dense, suffocating air
Cooking in a concrete jungle
It gets warmer, warmer
Until sweat flows like a waterfall
I came from a nation of a billion people,
Unlike any other you've known
The name India often rings a bell
But you don't know it until ya navigate the winding roads and denser populated streets

From street vendors selling spicy food
To the delicious aromas that fill my grandparent's house
I am from a thriving culture
With concrete houses rising high
While villages filled with plantations continue to survive

In today's fast-paced world,
I live a life filled with duality
One with Indian culture sprinkled with little Americanized bits
Which come together to form the perfect stew

This student is embracing his cultural duality but primarily identifies with his Indian heritage in this poem. The student calls it a "thriving culture" with smaller American influences.

Student 1134520

My background is of minimal importance
The only part of it that really matters is my inherited genotype.
The fact that I have a skin color
that protects me in our biased society.
The two X chromosomes that endanger
me in our society, and
The genes that dictated the formation

of eyes that hardly work, knees
that shred and tear, but also hands that can create.
The past hardly matters, except
the fact that my ancestors lived
and died so that my
family and I exist.
My dad and mom's line
of heritage is French and
Scottish, respectively.
But I don't care much,
and neither do you.

This student is relating her racial and gender identity to social oppressions. She concludes her poem with a sharp, negative imperative, acknowledging that she does not care about her heritage and neither does her audience.

Student 1168954

My origin is a farm or boat,
or maybe both.
Controversial times
and way of life.
I come from farmers,
and before that the English.
My family now
from Mississippi alone,
that is clear to see.

Raised in the hot winter sun,
on farms or the square,
from edge to edge of [deleted] County.
Paintings from the area sit in the study,
their unique depictions reflecting
the harsh reality of Mississippi life.
For years they've been passed down,
And will be for years to come.

The dense growth of farmland is shown;
it brings us back to a simpler time,
a farming time in Mississippi.
It reminds us that we were not

among the innocents, and pushes
us to a better and brighter future.

This student does not optimize on the heinous implication of slavery in Mississippi's
past. The student refers to it as "controversial" and "a simpler time," acknowledging that his
family might not have been "among the innocents" but looks to the future as redemption.

Student 758123

I am a combination of "ishes":

Oxford is my home, but I don't fit in
everyone here just wants to watch football
so I'm a yankee, northernish

but you see for my cousins my accent is southern
I don't say "wicked" in my daily vocabulary
so I'm southernish

Growing up where people go to church I don't
The easter bunny never visits
so I'm Jewish
but I don't go to temple every week
I'm not fluent in hebrew, I'm not orthodox
so I'm just jew ish
some of my ishes are Irish some are German
I am third generation Americanish with 2 last names
my ishes combine to form me

This student discusses the flexibility and limitations of her heritage by discussing an
identity struggle.

Student 855305

heritage
What is the heritage of a person born in a melting pot?
liquid so murky you can't find the beginning
start small, work back
me
pale girl blue eyes brown hair

my parents
pale father green eyes dark hair
freckled mother blue eyes bottled blonde hair
grandparents
tan skin, brown hair, green eyes with a husband I briefly knew
paled skin, blue eyes, brown and blonde hair
great grandparents
one side unknown.
one alive now, red haired and blue eyed
one I knew, brown haired brown eyed
a history past that I have never known
faces I have never seen hiding behind my own

˘ The multiplicity of heritage is examined in the above poem. The student recognizes that lines between race and culture are blurred since she or he cannot easily define her or his family's background. Culture and history, in this student's mind, is only valuable if she or he is able to know and own it.

Student 758119

Family from all over
Dad from the North Pole and Mom from the desert
People from the different backgrounds merged together
I guess opposites really do attract

Different languages
Different cultures
Different places
Experiences from everywhere

So many ways to see the world
Lucky to get a glimpse of how others live
Being able to have endless opportunities
But who am I

Born in the states
Lived in one place for most of my life
Relatives in other countries
Communication scarce

I've got the memories

I've heard the stories
I've seen the pictures
But they are not mine

Been taught about "our" past
Keep living in the present
Always looking towards the future
But who am I
And who will I become

This student emphasizes that her parent's culture does not define who she or he is today. The student acknowledges the past but recognizes her or his own agency facing an unknown future.

A Jangle Through New Orleans Webquest

I wanted my students to continue to explore the cultures that make up New Orleans and use their findings to begin a discussion on predominant and minority cultures. A webquest is an activity that poses different questions that students are able to search the Internet for answers to specific questions. I designed the questions for my webquest to help my students focus on cultural elements in New Orleans. A variety of answers were possible for each question because the answer will depend on whether the culture is predominant or minority. With this activity, my students would realize that a person's daily life is going to look different as she or he chooses to participate in a certain culture. Then, a predominant culture is identifiable as the most common answer to these questions while the subordinate cultures are going to produce deviant answers.

. I have included some student responses that show those students who dealt with the minority cultures in New Orleans.

Question #3: What kind of music is playing? When discussing music, Student 687207 focused on the types that were products of the minority cultures. This student also identified individuals who were from Louisiana and created the music:

“African American delta blues and Latin salsa are both very common in NOLA. NOLA rhythm blues made famous by the lives of Fats Domino, Professor Longhair and the Neville Brothers.”

The majority of the students’ answers the third question with jazz while others would identify zydeco as a second musical form that was popular in New Orleans. Very few students also identified Latin salsa as a musical form, acknowledging the geographical proximity of Louisiana with South America and the Spanish heritage that also influenced the colony’s history.

Question #4: How is [the Mardi Gras] celebration linked to the local religion?

Student 758227 was one of few students who connected the Mardi Gras celebrations with voodoo as well as Catholicism. Most other students would have recognized the Catholic holiday but did not consider how New Orleans’ diverse background could have influenced the European tradition.

After assigning this activity, I wish I would have designed the questions to cause my students to read through the website articles more critically and be more likely to find the subordinate cultures. Since many students had visited New Orleans before, they would answer the questions based on their experiences, demonstrating the predominant culture that is active in the city but not considering the other cultural possibilities. I also wanted my students to be able to understand that a predominant culture and subordinate cultures act simultaneously with each other and that society will place more value on one culture over another. I settled for explaining to my students that a predominant culture is going to have more of the popular aspects of culture, but I doubt that I gave enough time to the subordinate cultures that were present. I am also concerned that this activity might have given the students the misconception that culture is related to concrete aspects such as food, music, and religion without considering an entire

culture's ideas and beliefs

“The Praline Woman” Story Elements

While my traditional students, students who take regular English IV, read “The Praline Woman” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson as the pre-test, I assigned the story as an in-class reading for my students who are taking Advanced Placement in Literature and Composition. With the story, I gave students a worksheet that asked them to find the literary elements in the story: setting, characters, conflicts, resolution, voice, and tone. After they identified the elements, they were to develop a claim for a relevant theme in the story. I wanted to see how the students would dissect and conclude on the text. Their responses would indicate if they are interpreting the main character with an individualistic approach or also consider the systematic influences in the text.

Most students were able to identify the literary elements, but many failed to develop deeper reasoning behind the elements. Their final conclusions were too vague or general to constitute an authentic interpretation of the text. With any analysis, especially a sociocultural one, students need to be specific and detailed in their claims. A sociocultural interpretation is going to determine a character's behavior based on her or his culture, so the differentiation between cultures in a text needs to be evident.

If a student is using an individualistic approach, she or he is submitting to a text reading that focuses on a character's agency without considering the cultural or systematic influences. These students would conclude that the text's theme was survival because the main character has to sell her pralines in order to make a living. With a sociocultural reading, the reader would need to consider why the woman was in this social position and what institutional forces have placed her there. Student 758119 identified the theme as “making the most out of the least,” recognizing the trials that the praline woman has endured but placing an expectation that the praline woman

is unable to move beyond this position of poverty. These students are also not adding the knowledge of the woman's race as an African American in this analysis, making the praline woman's cultural background irrelevant while she supposedly holds the power to make the best of her living circumstances. Student 687186 makes the claim that the rainfall at the end of the story "symbolized that she was in the wrong by ceasing her actions" without an explanation of how the students has come to this conclusion. The conflict in this analysis is solely focused on the main character's decisions without placing the character's actions within the institution's limitations. In a sociocultural analysis, the reader would be trying to determine the author's social commentary based on the tensions in the text.

Other students attempted to analyze the racial nuances in the story but did not demonstrate a complete reading. These students identified the "irony" or "hypocrisy" of the main character's thoughts as she shared biased comments about the unseen characters based on their race or background. Several students recognized the cultural labeling in the main character's commentary but did not provide any reasoning for its significance in the text while student 758089 asserted that the praline woman "believes she is better than those of other cultures" because of the character's dialogue. These students are realizing that racial tensions in the story are important but they are unable to decide the author's purpose by highlighting these tensions. They are also not considering the repercussions of slavery or Jim Crow laws in this analysis because they are vaguely implying that people judge each other's appearances without any influence from their own cultures and society values. The praline woman is able to identify the street walkers by their race, so the reader must also assume that the silent street walkers are able to do the same for the praline woman and recognize her subordinate position based on her racial background. The rest of society is silent while the praline woman continues to assert herself into

others' lives. Student 746097 writes, "Her labeling nature is a main contributor to her isolation," trying to connect the character's actions with a larger idea in the story. In turn, the Creole society of this text is also labeling the praline woman, further isolating her.

Since the students were struggling to connect the individual elements to a larger theme for the text, many of them missed the racial tensions that produced the true conflict in the story. While the praline woman's plight to raise funds is certainly a conflict, a theme of racial injustice and institutional oppression would have lead the reader to conclude that she is placed in this situation because of society's prejudices and ignorance.

"The Mulatto" Character Reading

While the webquest's purpose was to identify the predominant and minority cultures, this story highlights the tensions between a predominant and minority culture by blurring the racial lines between a plantation owner and his enslaved son. The purpose of this reading was to determine if my students understood that a predominant culture is valued more than a subordinate culture; the predominant culture is in a position of power to oppress the minority cultures. "The Mulatto" by Victor Sejour shows that struggle between two characters. Overall, the students were engaged with the story, but they might not have recognized the institutional forces that placed these characters at odds with each other.

For this activity, I hoped that my students would consider the character's thought process in the story. "The Mulatto" poses the question if both the oppressor or the oppressed are victims of the society or if each individual has agency and is responsible for her or his actions within the social context. For most of my students, they were summarizing the text based on the characters' actions with no regard for the institutional forces at work. For example, the plantation owner Alfred is considered a cruel man for raping and enslaving the Haitian people, but my students did

not acknowledge that this was an accepted form of behavior within its historical context. As Alfred's colleagues would say, he was "a decent man, humane and loyal with his equals" (Sejour 4). This contrast was overlooked by most students. One student in particular, 855335, seemed to be dealing with this moral ambiguity when he/she summarized Section III of the story with:

"[Alfred] is running for his life and also pursuing Georges's wife Zeila. He is assuming Georges is planning to kill him at first but then saved him. He also is lusting after Zelia. He cares for Georges because he almost gave his life for him. Be he also wants Georges's wife."

This student also adds that Alfred is virtually absent from the second section of the story because he was "probably running his plantation." The student has paid notice to the institution that has created this tension between Alfred and Georges but does not address the final confrontation between the two characters in the last section. This final interaction between Alfred and Georges alludes to Alfred's unwavering power as a slave owner because Georges commits suicide upon learning that Alfred is his father. Since the student does not evaluate the resolution, I cannot be sure whether he/she understands the ultimate influence of slavery in this text.

Another student has considered Alfred's reputation and influence among his peers by making the comment, "He doesn't want anyone to know he has a mulatto kid."

Student 758208 describes Alfred and Georges having a "love-hate relationship." This comment places the two individuals at extremes with one another when realistically, Alfred and Georges never loved each other. Georges demonstrated devotion, which quickly turned to hatred once he learned that Alfred attempted to rape his wife and then execute her, but I would not say the two ever loved each other. This student also refers to Laisa as a "poor woman" and not a slave, avoiding the situation's hostility. Then, Georges wife tried to "kill" Alfred, according to

the student. From these comments, the slaves Georges and Zelia are capable of extreme behaviors while Alfred is passive.

Student 139414 also claimed that Alfred accused Zelia of attempting to kill him, but neither student points out the hypocrisy in this action. Alfred is in a position that gives him the power to define justice because of his social position, so he is able to excuse himself for his crimes and put an innocent person to death.

Student 758227 seeks to justify Georges' actions as the student shares his/her thoughts. Even though Georges is a strong character, he is virtually helpless whenever he faces Alfred, except for the final scene when he is fully in touch with his revenge.

Even though I asked the students to focus on one character, I thought they would see the predominant culture and minority culture against one another. The system from the beginning destined Georges to fail as shown in his death.

“The Mulatto” Short Essay

The students in the advanced placement class were tasked with writing about “The Mulatto” by Victor Sejour in a well-developed, thoughtful essay. They wrote these papers in class after reading the short story the day before. While this essay was preparing them for the written portion on the advanced placement exam in May, I knew this essay would give me the opportunity to analyze how a student was going to formally manage the racial and institutional themes in the short story. This assignment, as well as the others, have proven to me that students need higher-order thinking skills to address race and systematic oppressions in literature along with other medias. To write an essay that claims slavery is bad is undistinguished, but to write an essay that connects the literary elements to the author's social commentary on the slavery system is worthy of discussion.

The essay prompt was as follows: “The Mulatto” is a tale about two characters: Alfred, the plantation owner; and Georges, the slave. These characters have different motivations that are influenced by their cultural and social position in the short story. Write an essay analyzing how Sejour uses tone, word choice, imagery, and style/figurative language to make a social commentary using one or both of these characters.

In order to support the claim, the student needs to connect literary elements from the text to the theme. Some students will identify the literary elements and the theme, but they do not demonstrate thoughtful analysis in their writing. They resort to a vague interpretation, such as slavery is evil, and choose elements like harsh, gory imagery to support this interpretation. Nothing about this claim is false, but it does not require critical thinking. Student 1134520, however, is making a claim about the imagery in the story that reaches beyond basic descriptions. Instead of only stating that the dark imagery associated with slavery means that slavery is evil, the student also took into consideration the brighter, more optimistic images that were not connected with slavery. By making this distinction, the student was able to conclude that institutional slavery creates a dark life for everyone involved in the system while its absence reveals a happier, natural scene in the moments at the beginning of the story.

One student attempted to apply a universalist approach on this text by claiming that the story’s theme could transcend its slavery critique. Student 116894 wrote, “The relationship is meant to illustrate the consequences of decisions, and that’s really what the story is about,” taking the characters’ individual circumstances and making the central theme relatable, regardless of cultural identity and systematic oppressions. This student would also include that there are “no true winners,” recognizing the negative effects of slavery on both the owner and slave but not directly critiquing the system and how it was maintained during this time period.

On the other hand, student 758225 engages with how the system of slavery affects individuals but it reinforced by a predominant culture, adding that “acts done to slaves are for no reason, they can be stopped, yet they are simply ignored as the way of life.” By identifying the ignorance within the story through the narrator’s own indifference, the student touched on a claim that could also place the audience in the same position as the narrator.

Another student also participated in a universalist approach by dealing in absolutes. Student 839663 argues that “The main theme [Sejour] wants the reader to interpret from the text is that slavery is bad and it always ends up with the slave revolting and getting revenge on their [masters].” While slavery is indeed bad, this part of the claim does not call for any thoughtful analysis, and the student is also suggesting that all slaves usually revolt or seek vengeance against the masters. This assertion causes me to believe that this student has the impression that slaves were able to overpower the system and manage to replace the system with a newfound freedom and agency. The student does not recognize a call for action on the predominant culture’s role to change the system and places the responsibility for change solely on the subculture. For the majority of the submitted essay, the student resorted to summary and vaguely discussed the literary elements’ implications, leaving the student with an underdeveloped claim with unsettling implications.

Several students were able to move beyond identification and recall of the short story and connect Sejour’s social commentary to the literary elements. Student 758161 points out the “theatrical tale of revenge” that is meant to “shed light on evils in society that are accepted as normal,” meaning that Sejour structured his story in a way to highlight how society had become desensitized toward slavery’s horrors. Student 1134520 claimed that the author had an agenda that “influences the reader to think similarly to the author and lean towards the opinion that

slavery is evil...” by using bright, natural imagery in a setting where slavery does not exist and the dark, gory imagery whenever slavery is present in the story. Student 855431 agrees by adding “commonplace nature of the execution of a slave” when children are indifferent to the hanging and the objectification of female slaves. This student also adds that “the frame narrative allows the narrator to directly comment about the injustices of slavery,” connecting Sejour’s social objective to his writing.

Overall, students like 910857 and 687190 were able to recognize the “manufactured inequality” in the short story, but few were able to critically analyze how the short story critiques the influence of slavery. Even though the prompt did not call for this analysis, students also did little to consider the relationship between Georges and Alfred as father and son or slave and master. Race relations trump blood relations, since Alfred refuses to recognize Georges as his son, so he is comfortable to attempt to rape Georges’ wife and sentence her to be hanged. Today’s readers take for granted that society knows better after the fact of slavery and are unable to critically assess the significance of this piece within its historical and social context.

Quadroon Perspective Scenes

To gain insight on my students’ understanding of the quadroon culture, I tasked them to rewrite a scene from the book in the quadroon’s perspective. The student would give the silent subculture a voice and demonstrate how she or he perceives the quadroon’s social position in the book.

Many students relayed the quadroon’s personal, daily activities by rewriting the scene with a focus on caring for or following the children. These students usually did not have additional commentary regarding racial oppression, and they did not recognize the existence of other quadroons in the scenario. When the student comments on the quadroon’s relationship with

the Creole society, like student 758250, she or he acknowledges the quadroon's employer's treatment of the quadroon, as if it was a personal offense and not the product of systematic racism. Student 855335 writes that the quadroon loves the children that she cares for as her own and adds, "The Pontelliers are good people and treat me well. But Mr. Pontellier is very rude to us and makes me mad but I cannot say anything." These comments exert a level of contentment or helplessness in the subordinate position with no strong criticism toward the system.

Other students were able to recognize the systematic oppression in their scenes, but they wrote their quadroon characters to be passive and accepting their subordinate position. Student 758100 writes in the quadroon's inner monologue in reference to Madame Lebrun, "Why can't she do this on her own... This isn't this hard. Just stay focused, I said to myself. You're doing this for your family. You need this." While the student is questioning why the quadroon is one position and Madame Lebrun is in another, the student does not directly critique the system but settles for the system's unfortunate necessity. Again, student 775521 is able to differentiate between the circumstances that have placed Madame Lebrun and the quadroon in separate positions by saying:

"How I wish I could just stop for a minute and just sit and relax like Madame Lebrun and Robert are doing... I wish she would lend me something. So, what if I don't know what a Goncourt is? So, what if I am meant to sit still and be quiet? I am a person too...Just because I am 1/4th black, I am automatically labeled as black and automatically have less value than a person who is completely white... I shouldn't think this way. If Madame Lebrun knew my inner thoughts, I would be out. I would truly have nothing."

Just like 758100 though, the student accepts the surrounding circumstances, as well as implying that the quadroon's life apart from servitude would truly be nothing without recognizing that the quadroon would at least have her freedom.

Another student takes the complacency a step further when she or he fails to identify any form of racial oppression. Student 758185 provides this inner voice for the quadroon: "I've never understood why I'm treated differently," I thought. I wish I knew why I have to follow behind everybody. I just wanted to be treated like everyone else... I've always wanted a normal life. But that will never happen." With the last comment, the student leaves the character with no hope for racial justice while implying that the quadroon would not have been aware that her mixed ancestry has placed her as inferior in this society. Student 1475252 takes a harsher approach in her or his scene by writing dialogue that attacks the superior culture but finishes with, "All we ask for is a little respect." Even though the student is recognizing the injustice, unlike Student 758185, there is no call for action since the student settles for 'respect' with no desire for systematic change in the quadroon's livelihood.

On the other hand, several students were able to connect the systematic oppression with race and not claiming the conflict as solely tensions between social classes. Student 758221 says, "Because of my skin color I have a disadvantage in this world so I must work under some family to help provide for mine's," identifying that quadroon's race is what places her in the position. Students can easily identify the conflict as a struggle in social class without commenting on race since social class and race have been so closely linked in American history. Then, Student 687084 writes, "Life as a quadroon is a life that I would not wish on anyone. Honestly, in this culture I would not wish any hint of color on someone... I am not treated bad all the time, and that's more than other nurse-maids can say." This student is providing social

commentary in the quadroon's voice while also not resorting to a universalist perspective by saying that all quadroons are treated in the same way. Still, the student's comments cause the quadroon to be ashamed of her heritage instead of placing value on it in order to transcend the social prejudices.

This assignment gave me the opportunity to examine the student's thought process with social and racial injustice. If I had more time, I would explain to my students how some of these discourses do not completely explore the quadroon experience. Overall, I would want to break the "way things are" assumption and encourage the students to determine how justice can be achieved in these scenes.

Unit Surveys

On March 31, 2017, students with personal or parental consent were given the unit survey. The responses to these surveys remained anonymous, and students were instructed not to discuss their answers with me. The survey questioned the students on their experience during the unit and included four free-response questions. I compiled all of their short answer responses and identified common themes and concerns from the students.

Question #1: What have you learned about minority cultures (African American, Native American) during this unit? Many students identified the minority cultures as they are referred to or represented as the quadroon or mulatto characters from the short story and novella. Two students wrote that they were unaware that a person could have a mixed heritage with multiple cultures, and one student indicated that racial caste system in Louisiana was a characteristic of minority cultures. With these responses, I believed that many students had not considered the racial ambiguity that arises with mixed heritage before and how this ambiguity can complicate or cause conflicts for the literary characters. The next large portion of my

students honestly indicated that they had not learned anything new about minority cultures during this unit. These students explained that they were familiar with the cultural and racial tensions of Louisiana since they also reside in the South, and they believed that their school had performed well by teaching them extensively on racial topics in many classes. I agreed with these students: While Louisiana's creole culture is different than typical southern culture, the students were exposed to cultural implications that are associated with the literature.

Several students attempted to minimize racial tensions in their responses by failing to fully condemning former institutional oppressions. Below are their responses:

“African Americans and Native Americans are both in the same boat in society. Native American, however, have a little advantage.”

“I learned something I already knew, which was that [minority cultures] are treated differently from everyone else. They were treated differently but not as bad as they were treated back then.”

“During this unit, I learned that Louisiana was the melting pot for all sort of cultures, and that if you were a minority you were still treated better than other places in the South. Even if someone was mulatto or $\frac{1}{4}$ black, they were treated pretty fairly.”

“I learned how African Americans as well as Native have progressed over years...”

While some truth is evident in these responses, the students are generally addressing complicated racial topics. They also would rather discuss the progress of racial relations instead of critiquing or recognizing repercussion of past systematic oppressions on these minority groups.

Question #2: What was the most interesting thing you learned during this unit? For this question, most students answered that the Creole society as a whole or the cultural makeup of Louisiana was the most interesting part of the unit. Even though the students were familiar

with Louisiana because of their geographical proximity, the unit provided a brief colonial history and detailed the migrations and forced removals of peoples that would come together to create a society that was unique from the rest of the United States. Several students indicated that they were not aware of the existence of multiple cultures in Louisiana, demonstrating that they previously associated Louisiana with its predominant French and Catholic culture without knowing the various subcultures that influence but were also different from predominant culture.

Question #3: How do you think this unit could have been improved? Students provided various suggestions on how the unit could improve. Three recommendations that were consistent in the student responses: more discussions, more multicultural book, and more new cultures. Several students lamented that too many worksheets were used to keep them busy, and they would have preferred to have an open discussion in class about multicultural topics. Unfortunately, many worksheets were used for this unit in order for the researcher to have data to evaluate on the students, but I did provide a few opportunities for class discussion. However, the students were not accustomed to participating in class discussion, so I had difficulty in managing the classroom whenever the students did not show respect to each other by taking turn to speak or they would discuss topics not related to the discussion. I believe that more discussion would have been beneficial because the classroom needs to be an environment where all opinions are respected and valued.

Students indicated that *The Awakening* was not the best choice for a multicultural text, and I agree with their assertions. As I explained in my development for the unit, I had to adjust my plans in order to fulfill my placement requirements as well as research the implementation of multicultural literature in the classroom, so I decided to expose the students to poems and short stories by minority writers from the same time period as Kate Chopin and focus on the influence

of cultural and social positions in the novella. One student was very passionate in her or his response about multicultural literature:

“Actually using multicultural literature and RELEVANT works. There are many modern pieces of literature that discuss class struggles, racial tensions, and other clashes of cultures just in America. As significant and powerful as old texts are, 9 times out of 10, they won’t have any real effect on high school aged people... ALSO: we don’t want to read about straight white people anymore! We’ve read enough, we NEED more queer people of color as subjects.”

I most likely did not make an impact on this student’s preconceived beliefs about multicultural literature inclusion, but I appreciate this student’s comments because other students must have the same convictions. Modern society is vastly different than the one that is depicted in *The Awakening*. Even with a focus on the cultural and racial implications of the novella, a reader cannot have a complete understanding of minority cultures with this text.

Students also suggested that I presented them with cultures that they were not familiar with. I was unable to select literature from a Muslim, Asian, or other minority perspective because I had to keep the literature relevant to *The Awakening* in order to build foundational knowledge about Louisiana’s diverse background. Still, I sought to challenge the students’ preconceived notions about race by presenting them with racial ambiguities and complexities with works by Rain C. Gomez, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, and Victor Sejour - all authors with mixed cultural heritage. Since many students indicated that racial and cultural mixing was an important lesson for them during this unit, I hope that they will be encouraged to continue to explore other cultures.

Question #4: Select a character... describe how the character’s culture affects her or

his life. Discuss how her or his experience is different from your life experience. I wrote the question to challenge the students to not resort to a universalist perspective by comparing themselves to characters without first recognizing the cultural differences. Edna Pontellier from *The Awakening* and Georges from “The Mulatto” were the most popular choices for students. With this question, I would be able to assess what the students considered to be cultural characteristics and tensions between cultures.

When answering this question for Edna Pontellier, most of the students were able to identify that she was restricted by society because she was a woman, but the students were not specific about these oppressions and did not consider Edna’s race in their responses. These answers tended to have an individualist application to Edna’s situation by focusing on her actions and thoughts without considering how Edna’s social conflicts also reflect other women in this time period. Several students point out that Edna was an outsider to the creole society, “struggling and unhappy with her situation so she begins to rebel.” By distinguishing Edna as an outsider, the student is implying that Edna was the exception to the culture’s rules without directly critiquing how women were considered inferior as American citizens. The same student finishes the answer by saying, “My experience is different because the problem has been resolved but it is still apparent with women being treated unfairly.” This general conclusion asserts that the mistreatment of women is a personal issue and not a repercussion of systematic discrimination. Students who chose Edna Pontellier agreed that she was mistreated in her position but mostly associated the conflict on a personal level within her family and not an implication of society.

Students who chose to analyze Georges were quick to say that they were unlike Georges because he was a slave. These responses heavily contributed to the idea that another culture is

unable to be understood if the individual is unable to relate to the other culture. Students made comments such as “This is different from my life because I was and will never be a slave because slavery no longer exist,” “his life is different from mines because he was a slave but he was also his owners son,” and “I knew my father from birth so I don’t know how this feel.” The majority of students simply characterized Georges as a slave and did not explore more into his character or cultural background. While slavery can be a difficult topic to address, these students are characterizing George’s cultures by the institutional oppressions. One student attempts to analyze Georges’ agency within his culture and says, “Georges, the slave from the Mulatto, culture/background opens his eyes to his place in his society and the power his master has over him e.i. being able to kill his wife and ruin his family.” This student recognizes that Georges is also becoming aware of and challenging the social oppressions, and the student is not letting the cultural differences prevent her or him to engage with Georges’ culture. While not every student is going to become an authority of knowledge for every culture, the student needs to be open and willing to interact with these other cultures.

A few students did not answer the question in their responses. One student asserted that “The culture in the stories is too similar to my culture and life experiences to really make an in-depth comparison.” While the Louisiana creole culture is familiar to the students, the student should have been able to identify the differences between her or himself with any of the characters or authors that were covered in the unit. The student is not taking a complete universalist stance when approaching this question, but she or he is not willing to handle the racial ambiguity or the racial oppressions that were discussed. Another student simply stated that “Any minority in the South = oppressed” but does not provide an explanation for this conclusion. The student is partially pluralistic since she or he recognizes the multiple cultures in the South,

but she or he does not critique the systematic oppressions that marginalized the minority cultures. These students give the impression that they understood the cultures, but their resistance to discuss oppressive systems in-depth does not cause me to believe that they holistically considered the multicultural literature.

Chapter 5: Reflection and Conclusion

Two weeks out of an entire school year is just a snapshot of a student's learning experience. The past two weeks have not been perfect, but I believe that I was able to accomplish what I had set myself out to do: to include multicultural literature in my unit plan and expose students to minority narratives about social oppressions. From my students' responses and my reflection, I have made several conclusions about my research process and content.

One discourse is not superior over the other, or demonstrates higher comprehension or intelligence. Regardless of ability, students used a variety of discourses when engaging with the texts. As a teacher, I had to be conscious that I was not preferring one discourse over the other when I was grading their work because none of the classroom tasks that I assigned my students required them to read or write in a certain discourse. Their work was strictly how they chose to analyze the literary pieces. However, when a reader uses one discourse, she or he is going to miss particular elements of the text, especially when analyzing cultures. I want to teach my future students to be know these discourses and how to use each of them appropriately in their analyses.

I do not think consistency or common reading is unhelpful, but we need to consider what we are presenting to students as essential knowledge. Compared to the rest of their lives, students are only in school for a short time, and I do not want my students to leave with the misconception that literary knowledge is only meant for a white male culture. My students claimed that *The Awakening* was not a multicultural text because it was not about or written by a member of a minority culture, and they called for something more multicultural and contemporary to be used for this unit. While my students were unaware of my constraints in

selecting a text, I agreed with them. When teachers use traditional texts to teach common views on humanity, then they are resorting to a universalist approach and are missing views from a significantly large part of the human population. To teach our students to be productive citizens, knowledge of other culture is essential.

The discussion of race in my class was presented with forthrightness and sensitivity. Based on readings on “The Praline Woman,” race was usually a secondary part of the discussion with many students not addressing the topic at all. Whenever students questioned me about culture, I did my best not to shy away from the more controversial thought points and give points of discussion for the rest of the class. For example, I reminded students consistently that Louisiana land originally belong to the various native tribes before western expansion. I also realized that I referred to early interracial relationships without acknowledging that some of these affairs were the result of rape. I did not want my students to create the misconception that Louisiana’s beginnings as well as the rest of the country were innocent or entirely heroic. My students also handled these conversations with grace with little confrontation between classmates or me. I cautioned my students not to act or interpret texts in ultimatums but to dwell in the ambiguity of morality and racial identity.

I also recognized that race and culture during this unit was mostly discussed in terms of oppression and injustice. While I need to continue bringing awareness to these issues, I do not want to only characterize cultures by systematic oppression. I want to embrace all cultural aspects in a group because African American and Native American history involve so much more than slavery and forced removals. When a culture is only discussed by its relation with oppression, than a Eurocentric view is still taking place. Activities like the cultural memory poem and the webquest gave students the opportunity to explore their own cultures as well as the

Louisiana creole culture. I want to provide more cultural experiences for my students, whether that be through literature, guest speakers, or field trips. By incorporating these activities throughout the year, a student will have more understanding about a particular culture besides a brief survey.

An in-depth exploration of race and culture cannot be achieved without representatives of those cultural groups. As a Caucasian female, I acknowledge that I cannot fully comprehend another culture's experience, and my personal discourse contains gaps in knowledge and experience. I want to invite and encourage people from these cultures to be guests in my classroom in order to provide my students with a closer picture. If members of the predominant culture are primarily leading the discussions, then multicultural literature cannot reach its full potential or effect in the classroom. My future classroom will be an open door for all cultures to be involved in the learning process.

All of these skills and knowledge cannot be taught within a single unit. It is my conviction that literary theory and multicultural literature need to be a part of the curriculum throughout the high school experience. Teachers and administrators need to prove their value for cultural competence by making cultural inclusion a priority in the classroom and on the school campus. With its implementation throughout the school year, multicultural literature is more likely to make a lasting impression on students as they graduate from high school and become citizens in a global community.

My bookshelf looks very different than how it looked in high school. Sherman Alexie, Zora Neale Hurston, Randa Abdel-Fattah, and others have found a place on my shelves, and there is still plenty of room for many more. I will continue to challenge myself and future students to fill in the gaps of our landscapes to create a community of knowledge that is inclusive

for all members.

Appendix A: IRB Forms

The Implementation of Multicultural Literature in Secondary English

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Description

The purpose of this research is to evaluate a preservice teacher's experience in the implementation of multicultural literature in a secondary English classroom and to evaluate the students' reactions to the proposed unit. We would like to review work completed by students during the unit as well as survey students on their unit reflections. Names and other identifying information will not be attached to the students' work or responses.

Cost and Payments

The time students will be evaluated for their coursework will be two weeks, concluding with the survey that will take twenty minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits

Students may feel uncomfortable while completing the unit as the topics address a variety of cultures during a time period when minority groups were severely marginalized in American society. However, students should be able to enjoy the class time spent on this unit with their student teacher.

Confidentiality

No identifiable information will be recorded, therefore we do not think you can be identified from this study.

Right to Withdraw

Students do not have to participate in this study. All students will be expected to complete class assignments and participate in class. Students do not have to complete the final survey. Students who decide they do not want their coursework to be used for research or do not want to complete the final survey, please inform Ms. Smiley in person or by email (contact information listed above).

IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the above information. By completing the survey/interview I consent to participate in the study.

Student Participants in Investigators' Classes

Special human research subject protections apply where there is any possibility of undue influence – such as for students in classes of investigators. Investigators can recruit from their classes but only by providing information on availability of studies. They can encourage you to participate, but they cannot exert any pressure for you to do so. Therefore, if you experience any undue influence from your instructor, you should contact the IRB via phone (662-915-7482) or email (irb@olemiss.edu) and report the specific details. You will remain anonymous in an investigation.

Consent for Your Child to Participate in Research

The Implementation of Multicultural Literature in Secondary English Classrooms

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The purpose of this study

To gain insight into high school seniors' responses to the investigator's teaching strategies while incorporating multicultural literature into a secondary English class curriculum. The class will read short stories, poems, and novels written about or by people from a minority culture. This unit is created by Ms. Movitz's student teacher, Ms. Smiley.

What your child will do for this study

1. All students will participate in a lesson unit created by Ms. Smiley on March 20, 2017 to March 31, 2017.
 - Students will read the following selected texts and materials:
 - *Smoked Mullet Cornbread Crawdad Memory* by Rain C. Gomez
 - Short Stories by Alice Dunbar Nelson
 - "The Mulatto" by Victor Sejour
 - *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin
 - Students will also discuss literary themes and ideas while collaborating with other classmates in carefully prepared classroom activities.
2. On March 31, students who volunteered and have parental consent will participate in a 20-minute survey and questionnaire that will provide insights regarding the student's experience on participating in the class activities over the past two weeks.
 - This survey is a brief evaluation of the student's experience and Ms. Smiley's teaching strategies for the two-week unit.
3. If the student has volunteered and has parental consent, her or his work from the two-week period will be collected and reviewed for inclusion in Ms. Smiley's study.

Time required for this study

Each day is a 50-minute class period - for a total of 11.6 hours. The final survey should be completed in a twenty-minute sitting.

Possible risks from participation

There are no serious anticipated risks to your child from participating in the study. However, your child may feel uncomfortable while completing the unit as the topics address a vary of cultures during a time period when minority groups were severely marginalized in American society.

Benefits from participation

Neither you nor your child should expect benefits or incentives from participating in this study. However, your child might experience satisfaction from contributing to educational research. Also, participating in this research will equip your child with the skills needed to be successful in a postgraduate setting.

Confidentiality

Research team members will have access to records from this study. We will protect confidentiality by coding the surveys and physically separating information that identifies your child from your responses.

Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) – the committee responsible for reviewing the ethics of, approving, and monitoring all research with humans – have authority to access all records. However, the IRB will request identifiers only when necessary. We will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone else without your written consent unless required by law.

Right to Withdraw

You do not have to volunteer for this study, your child does not have to participate, and there is no penalty if either of you refuses. If your child starts the study and either one of you decides that you do not wish to complete, simply notify the experimenter. Withdrawal from the study will not affect your current or future relationship with the Department of Education, or with the University, and it will not cause a loss of benefits to which your child is entitled.

The researchers may stop your child's participation in the study without your consent and for any reason, such as protecting your child's safety or protecting the integrity of the research data.

Student Participants in Investigators' Classes

Special human research subject protections apply where there is any possibility of coercion – such as for students in classes of investigators. Investigators can recruit from their classes but only by providing information on availability of studies. They can encourage participation, but they cannot exert any coercive pressure. Therefore, if your child experience anys coercion from the instructor, you should contact the IRB via phone (662-915-7482) or email (irb@olemiss.edu) and report the specific form of coercion. You will remain anonymous in an investigation.

IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study fulfills the human research subject protections obligations required by state and federal law and University policies. If you have any questions

or concerns regarding your rights or your child's rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, then decide if you want your child to be in the study or not.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have been given an unsigned copy of this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions, and I have received answers. I consent to allow my child to participate.

Furthermore, I also affirm that the experimenter explained the study to me and told me about the study's risks as well as my right and my child's right to refuse to participate and to withdraw, and that I am the parent/legal guardian of the child listed below.

Signature_____

Date _____

Printed name of Parent/Legal Guardian

Printed name of Child

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: The Implementation of Multicultural Literature in Secondary English

Investigator

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By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

The purpose of this study

To gain insight into high school seniors' responses to the investigator's teaching strategies while incorporating multicultural literature into a secondary English class curriculum.

What you will do for this study

Students will attend English IV class where the investigator will teach a multicultural literature unit. You will participate in a variety of activities and engage with your classmates as you discuss the selected literature for the designated two weeks. You may volunteer to have your coursework reviewed for the investigator's research. At the conclusion of the unit, you will complete a voluntary survey about your experience during the unit.

Time required for this study

This study will be conducted over a period of two weeks. You will participate in the study for 50-minute class periods each day for a total of ten class periods. You will take at the end a 20 minute survey at the end of the unit.

Possible risks from your participation

Students may feel uncomfortable while completing the unit as the topics address a variety of cultures during a time period when minority groups were severely marginalized in American society.

Benefits from your participation

You should not expect benefits from participating in this study. However, you might experience satisfaction from contributing to educational research. You may also feel personal fulfillment as you accomplish the coursework assigned to you by your student teacher.

Incentives

Participation in the final survey is completely voluntary and will not be used as a grade for the class. All other work completed during the two-week period will count toward your final grade, but your grade will

not be affected based on your participation in the final survey. Students must volunteer to have their coursework reviewed for inclusion in the investigator’s research.

Confidentiality

Research team members will have access to your records. They will protect confidentiality by physically separating information that identifies you from your responses.

Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) – the committee responsible for reviewing the ethics of, approving, and monitoring all research with humans – have authority to access all records. However, the IRB will request identifiers only when necessary.

Right to Withdraw

You do not have to volunteer for this study, and there is no penalty if you refuse. If you begin the survey and decide that you do not wish to complete, simply notify the experimenter. Withdrawal will not affect your current or future grade in your English IV class, and it will not affect your plan to graduate from Oxford High School. You will not lose any benefits.

The researchers may terminate your participation in the study without regard to your consent and for any reason, such as protecting your safety and protecting the integrity of the research data. A termination will not have any affect on your current or future grade in your English IV class.

IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study fulfills the human research subject protections obligations required by state and federal law and University policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, then decide if you want to be in the study or not.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have been given a copy of this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions, and I have received answers. I consent to participate in the study. Furthermore, I also affirm that the experimenter explained the study to me and told me about the study’s risks as well as my right to refuse to participate and to withdraw.

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed name of Participant

STUDENT ID# _____ DATE _____

THIS SURVEY IS VOLUNTARY AND WILL NOT BE FACTORED INTO YOUR CLASS GRADE.

Circle the corresponding numerical value for your thoughts and feelings:

1. How would you rate the effectiveness of Ms. Smiley's instruction during this unit?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Neutral		Excellent

2. How would you rate your level of enjoyment of the unit?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Neutral		Excellent

3. Did the readings in this unit help you gain an understanding of other cultures?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Neutral		Excellent

4. Did the class discussions in this unit help you gain an understanding of other cultures?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Neutral		Excellent

5. Did the class activities in this unit help you gain an understanding of other cultures?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Neutral		Excellent

Answer the following questions in your own words:

1. What have you learned about minority cultures (African American, Native American) during this unit?

Appendix B: Classroom Tasks

MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE PRE-TEST

READ ALL THE DIRECTIONS...

This is a revised excerpt of the short story “The Praline Woman” by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, a prominent African American writer from New Orleans, Louisiana. She published her first collection of short stories in 1895.

Read the excerpt and then answer the following questions.

The praline woman sits by the side of the Archbishop's quaint little old chapel on Royal Street, and slowly waves her latanier fan over the pink and brown wares.

"Pralines, pralines. Ah, ma'amzelle, you buy? Please, ma'amzelle, these pralines, dey be fine, ver' fresh."

"But no, maman, you are not sure?"

"My baby, my little one, she put dese up hissef. He's hands' so small, ma'amzelle, like you's, but brown. She put dese up dis morn'. You take none? No husband fo' you den!"

"Ah, my little one, you take? Five, bebe, may the good God keep you good!"

"Yes, madame, I know you stranger. You don' look like dese New Orleans peop'. You like dose Yankee dat come down 'fo' de war."

Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, chimes the Cathedral bell across Jack-son Square, and the praline woman crosses herself.

"Hail, Mary, full of grace--"

"Pralines, madame? You buy like dat? Ten, madame, an' one lil' piece fo' extra fo' madame's lil' bebe. Ah, it's good!"

"Pralines, pralines, so fresh, so fine! M'sieu would like some fo' he's lil' gal' at home? But no, what's dat you say? She's daid! Ah, m'sieu, 'til my lil' gal what died long year ago. Misere, misere!"

"Here come dat lazy Indien squaw. What she good fo', anyhow? She jes' sit like dat in de French Market an' sell her file, an' sleep, sleep, sleep, like so in he's blanket. Hey, dere, you, Tonita, how goes you' beezness?"

STORY ELEMENTS

Title: _____ Author: _____

What is the **setting**? How is this relevant to the story?

Who are the **characters**? How are their roles in the story important?

Identify any **conflicts** in the story. What kind of **tensions** is the author bringing attention to?

Is there a **resolution** in this story? If not, what are your conclusions?

Describe the **voice** and **tone** of the story. Who is the primary speaker?

Claim a **theme** for this story. Explain why you chose this theme based on evidence in the text and your analysis of the story elements combined.

“The Mulatto” Character Reading

What is a mulatto? _____

What happened in **Section I** of the story?

Directions: Read “The Mulatto” by Victor Sejour with your partner. As you read, stop at the end of each section, discuss with your partner, and record a reflection about your selected character’s experience. Answers receive more points if they are thoughtful and complete.

Circle Your Character: **Alfred** **Georges**

SECTION II

SECTION III

SECTION IV

SECTION V

“The Mulatto” Essay Prompt and Rubric

DIRECTIONS: After reading "The Mulatto" and filling in your TWIST, you will develop and write an essay using the following prompt. The rubric is also included for you to use as a tool.

When you have completed the essay, you will turn in the essay **AND** your TWIST. The essay will be a level two grade, and the TWIST will be worth up to 5 bonus points, which will be added to your final score. (Example: If you make 17/20 = 85 + 5 bonus = 90)

ESSAY PROMPT:

“The Mulatto” is a tale about two characters: Alfred, the plantation owner; and Georges, the slave. These characters have different motivations that are influenced by their cultural and social position in the short story. Write an essay analyzing how Sejour uses tone, word choice, imagery, and style/figurative language to make a social commentary using one of these characters.

RUBRIC:

The student...

answers the prompt in the essay.

3 2 1 0

has a strong, clear thesis and claim statements.

3 2 1 0

has a logically organized argument to support the claim.

3 2 1 0

uses textual evidence for support analysis.

3 2 1 0

analyzes the tone in the short story.

2 0

analyzes word choice in the short story.

2 0

analyzes imagery in the short story.

2 0

analyzes style/figurative language used in the short story.

2 0

TOTAL: _____/20

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