

CURRICULAR PACKAGE

I. HEADING

TITLE: African-American History and Culture in the English Classroom
AUTHOR / SCHOOL: Amy L. Vagi / Glenville High School
COURSE: English 1
GRADE LEVEL: 9

STANDARDS: * Cleveland Municipal School District ELA Standards that directly support state proficiency expectations

Reading

9-10: R2.1 Comprehend nonfiction using interpretive, critical, and evaluative processes.

Performance Indicators: Analyze the characteristics of literary forms and genres.*

Evaluate the attitude/tone of a writer in shaping the presentation of a subject.*

Analyze how non-fictional texts reflect the culture that shaped them.

Make inferences and draw conclusions about non-fictional contexts, events, characters, settings, themes.*

9-10: R3.2 Read and comprehend a informational materials to develop understanding and expertise and produce written or oral work that:

Performance Indicators: restates or summarizes information.*

relates new information to prior knowledge and experience

makes connections to related topics or information

extends ideas

Writing

9-10: W2.4 Respond to literature.

Performance Indicators: Demonstrate understanding of literary work through suggesting an interpretation.*

Listening, Speaking and Viewing

9-10: S1.2 Participate in group activities.

Performance Indicators: Divide labor so as to achieve the overall group goal efficiently.

Give reasons in support of opinions expressed.

Employ a group of decision-making techniques, such as brainstorming and a problem-solving sequence.

II.

SCOPE OF CURRICULAR PACKAGE: 8 blocks of 90-minutes each

III. BRIEF INTRODUCTION:

The following curricular package integrates African-American history and culture into a nonfiction unit in a ninth grade English class. The slave narratives, included in most nonfiction units, will have a larger context with which to aid students' understanding. Students will explore slavery, the Great Migration, the Gullah language and culture, slave life on the plantations, spirituals, the Underground Railroad, quilting, and the housing/living conditions of slaves and free persons of color in the Antebellum period. Connections will be made to Cleveland, Ohio.

IV. OBJECTIVES:

- (1) Learner will identify and recognize characteristics of nonfiction in literary works.
- (2) Learner will explore the language and culture of the Gullah people.
- (3) Learner will compare and contrast the purposes of spirituals and quilts in terms of their relationships to escape from bondage.
- (4) Learner will make connections between events/ideas described in slave narratives and historical documentation of the same events/ideas.

V. CONTENT ELEMENTS:

A. DAY 1: Nonfiction and the Great Migration

Description: Learner will describe people, places, events, and ideas related to slavery and the Great Migration.

Procedure:

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|------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Class Discussion Q: Why is nonfiction important? How is it relevant to our lives?
<i>(desired response: It is the stories of our people/ancestors)</i> |
| 10 minutes | KWL chart on terms related to slavery and the Great Migration |
| 10 minutes | Class Discussion Q: What do you know about slavery / Great Migration?
<i>(put responses on chalkboard)</i> |
| 15 minutes | Mini-lecture on slavery / Great Migration (teacher generated) |

C. DAY 3: SLAVE JOBS/RESPONSIBILITIES

Description: Learner will explain the jobs and responsibilities of slaves.

Procedure:

- 15 minutes Think-Pair-Share Activity
Topic: Jobs/responsibilities of slaves
- 20 minutes Mini-lecture on rice cultivation, skilled artisans, and the task system (teacher generated)
- 50 minutes Learning Centers - 17 minutes each center
(1) Students will read selections from *Down By the Riverside*
(2) Students will view photographs in *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*
(3) Students will view power point presentations on related topics from the Great Migration.

Materials: lecture notes, 2 texts above, power point presentations / computers

Evaluation: Homework - Write a unified paragraph on one of the jobs/responsibilities you learned about today.

D. DAY 4: SPIRITUALS AND ESCAPE

Description: Learner will explore the purposes of spirituals.

Procedure:

- 10 minutes Sharing of paragraphs on jobs/responsibilities
- 20 minutes Definition of "assimilate."

Class Discussion Q: How did the slaves resist complete assimilation?
(desired response: Through religion, songs, cooking)

Definition of "spirituals" and notes on their multiple purposes.
- 10 minutes As a class, play a spiritual, decide its purpose, and justify response. Use cassette from below.
- 15 minutes In pairs, give students the lyrics to "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Steal Away." Have students identify purpose (escape) and justify.
- 15 minutes Share responses and then play the 2 spirituals.
- 10 minutes Class Discussion

Q: What else do you know about escape? Why? How?

Q: How do you think the slaves planned their escapes?

10 minutes Homework: Using your family, books, or the Internet, discover other ways slaves concealed messages or communicated escape. Write this down on paper with your source information to be turned in.

Materials: "We'll Stand the Storm (and other spirituals)" by Ron and Natalie Daise (cassette recording), lyrics to spirituals, notes on spirituals/assimilation

Evaluation: Students will identify the purpose of spirituals and justify their responses by studying the written words.

E. DAY 5: SLAVE NARRATIVES

Description: Learner will read slave narratives and make connections between the events/ideas described in the narrative to the actual events/ideas documented in historical references.

Procedure:

15 minutes Class Discussion / Review of Escape
Share homework findings (desired finding: quilting)

40 minutes Class reading of Harriet Jacobs "The Loophole of Retreat" from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.

20 minutes Students will write a letter to Harriet Jacobs expressing their thoughts on her 7 years of hiding in such a tiny place. Students should be prompted to ask Harriet Jacobs questions about her physical condition, physical activities, emotions, motivation to continue hiding, motivation to escape, etc. Share with class.

15 minutes Partner Activity: Compare/contrast Harriet Jacobs' account of events with what you have learned in the last 5 days. (Written)

Materials: *Elements of Literature* textbook, 3rd edition (or other copy of Jacobs' story)

Evaluation: Written comparison of events (quality papers will reflect on the non-fiction aspect of Jacobs' story).

Letter to Harriet Jacobs (summary and reflection).

F. DAY 6: SLAVE NARRATIVES

Description: Learner will read slave narratives and make connections between the events/ideas described in the narrative to the actual events/ideas documented in historical references.

Procedure:

- 15 minutes Review of Harriet Jacobs.
Share partner responses from previous day.
- 40 minutes Group Activity: Small teams (3 or 4) will read one of the following articles from Encarta Africana's Library of Black America and report to the class the relationship to Harriet Jacobs' narrative:
- (1) "Woman Escaping in a Box, 1857" (listed under *The Underground Railroad*)
 - (2) "Escaping in a Chest" (listed in *The Underground Railroad*; begins with Lear Green)
 - (3) Ch. XXIX "Preparations for Escape" (listed under *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*)
- 30 minutes Group Activity: Small teams (2 or 3) will design on drawing paper their vision of what slave cabins/quarters looked like. This activity is to be used as a comparison to actual slave quarters, therefore, do not allow students to use reference materials and do not assist students in their design.
- Materials:** hard copies of the articles from Encarta Africana, drawing paper, pencils
- Evaluation:** Oral analysis

G. DAY 7: SLAVE NARRATIVES

Description: Learner will read slave narratives and make connections between the events/ideas described in the narrative to the actual events/ideas documented in historical references.

Procedure:

- 10 minutes Finish up drawings of slave cabins.

- 15 minutes Share designs with the class.
- 20 minutes Share Great Migration power point presentation (mine) on rural and urban plantations.
- 10 minutes Journal: Describe the similarities and differences you noted between what you and your classmates drew and what history actually shows us.
- 20 minutes Use tracing paper and make revisions to slave cabins.
Provide a written explanation on index cards for the team's drawing.
- 15 minutes Read another slave narrative (possibly Olaudah Equiano's or whatever is available in the English textbook) for discussion/comparison the next day.
- Materials:** drawing paper, pencils, tracing paper, index cards, computers w/ power point presentation
- Evaluation:** Revisions of drawings and explanations

H. DAY 8: CLEVELAND

Description: Learner will make comparisons of historical information to present day Cleveland.

Procedure:

***** Finish reading/discussing any relevant slave narratives
(may be more than one class period)

20 minutes Mini-lecture on housing patterns using Great Migration power point presentation (mine) and Chapter 8 "Architecture" in John Michael Vlach's *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*.

Materials: computer, above text

Evaluation: Interview family members and/or community members about one of the following topics:

- (a) use of space in homes
- (b) migration of blacks to Cleveland
- (c) occupations in the family
- (d) the use of porches

VI. WAYS TO EXTEND/ENHANCE THE PACKAGE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:

- Study of quilting and connections to the Underground Railroad
- Create your own escape spiritual
- Write your own narrative
- Read *The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Pap, Michael S., ed. *Ethnic Communities of Cleveland*. Cleveland: Institute for Soviet and East European Studies, 1973.

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Rosengarten, Dale, et al., *Between the Tracks: Charleston's East Side During the 19th-century*. The Charleston Museum: Archaeological Contributions 17, Sept. 1987.

Tobin, Jacqueline L. and Dobard, Raymond G. *Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad*. NY: First Anchor Books, 2000.

Vlach, John Michael. *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*. Athens, GA: Brown Thrasher Book, 1990.

Wood, Peter H. *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1974.

www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/j1.html

www.undergroundrailroad.org/stories.asp

Encarta Africana

Power Point Presentation of Vagi, Shupp, and Dozier (on group CD)

VIII. APPENDIX

➤ Power Point Presentation Images:

- Boone Hall Plantation - Mount Pleasant, S.C.
- McLeod Plantation - James Island, S.C.
- Hampton Plantation - McClellanville, S.C.
- Caw Caw Interpretive Center - Ravenal, S.C.
- Aiken-Rhett House - Charleston, S.C.
- 94 Smith Street
- 72 Pitt Street
- 73 Pitt Street
- 7 Coming Street
- 9 Coming Street
- Figures of Field Hand and Domestic Servant from John W. Blassingame's *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South*
- Free persons of color map from Dale Rosengarten's *Between the Tracks*

➤ All selected readings should be taken from the original texts. Space was not adequate to provide additional appendices.

➤ Teacher lectures, KWL chart, and map of Africa were not designed at the time of submission. Information for the above can be taken from the texts in the bibliography or from other presentations of the Great Migration Group. Prior knowledge of students and grade level should be considered.

REVISED LESSON PLAN

1. Class periods: changed from 1 to 8
2. Main purpose/goal: a new emphasis on comparing/contrasting nonfiction narratives to factual documents

a new connection to housing in Cleveland, Ohio
3. Materials: Power Point presentations with digital images
Various books and websites
4. Instructional materials: Addition of Power Point and Encarta Africana
5. Instructional methods: Mostly the same (mini-lecture, small group, discussions).
Addition of computer resources if computers are available.
I would be interested in working with the other 5 Glenville participants to create a school-wide program.
6. Activities: I decided to have students draw their image of slave quarters before showing them the actual images taken in South Carolina. I am interested in how well they visually interpret what they read.

More reflection in terms of comparison/contrast.

An involvement of family/community through interviews/research.
7. Student Outcomes: Although I plan on using traditional methods of evaluation, I am relying more on a holistic method. Instead of using factual quizzes, I am expecting them to discuss issues (heavy weight on participation), write about particular issues, and use family and other resources to provide new information. I believe that this curricular package will provide a higher level of interest than "ordinary history" (primarily because I as the teacher am more invested in the material) and that students will be more interested in the learning for the sake of learning. I believe that students will find nonfiction more interesting, relevant, and approachable.

***See content of curricular package for fine tuning of original lesson plan. Although I am not teaching Black American Literature next year, I do intend to use the information I previously generated on the vernacular tradition (namely spirituals) in my unit.

***I expect to use this curricular package during the nonfiction unit of English 1 - approximately late February (2nd semester). Yes, I would allow a member of the Great Migration staff to attend a related class. Come join in the fun!

