

Walking in their Shoes-Learning the Civil War through Writing

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Introduction

As an adult, I learned to love writing as a way to express my feelings. However, as a teacher I have acquired great apprehension when teaching writing to my students. I knew I had to improve my professional development and increase my comfort level with teaching writing to my future students. As I try to reflect on my reluctance, I wonder whether it is the length of the process, or the subjectiveness of writing. I recognize how important writing is for creating competent communicators in students' educational and professional lives. In my past experience, I recognize the reluctance of students when asked to write for a class assignment. If we keep in mind the crux of the writing process, the revision process can be last. I want to change my students' attitudes about writing as well as my own about the writing process and the experience. As a fifth grade teacher, my students need to learn and produce more procedural writing forms, such as expository essays. This is not appealing to them, as they have been used to using the narrative form of writing since as early as kindergarten, first grade. I want them to understand that we read and write for a specific communicative purpose. So, if we are trying to persuade someone to see our views on a particular topic, we must express ourselves in a way to convince or sway. If we are trying to portray or recreate a particular event we witnessed, we must write in a descriptive and colorful way, in order to allow our readers to visualize an accurate picture of what we are attempting to recreate in the minds of others. I hope to accomplish students' love for writing as well as the understanding of how powerful words can be, if chosen correctly and cohesively strung together. Through my unit, I hope to use history as a vehicle that students can use to paint a beautiful picture of their interactions and feelings about their experiences with history. I hope to have my students walk away with a better appreciation of the Civil War period of American history, as well as the numerous perspectives represented during this time.

Rationale

I remember being a fifth grader, sitting in my class, learning social studies and writing daily. Somehow, my teachers were able to teach the content in the textbooks from cover to cover. I also remember learning proper grammar and diagramming sentences, while

writing through the process of brainstorming, revision, publishing, etc. I can recall creating projects about the Lenni Lenape Indians, who were native to my state, New Jersey and creating boats mimicking the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria. Not knowing about what it entails to be a teacher, I thought this was the norm. However, with time constraints, and focusing on subjects tested on the End of Grade standardized tests, subjects like social studies and writing fall to the wayside. Each of my five years I have taught, I have always struggled with the idea of how to teach more social studies and writing during the year. I realize how much our students leave us NOT knowing about their world and their history and it is unsettling. There are schools that exist today that have taken out many subjects because mastery of reading and math and their performance on standardized tests are their priority. However, as conscientious educators, we know that we must work to create well prepared citizens in our society, who can function on multiple levels by writing and reading various types of material in a real world setting.

One has to be quite creative by sneaking these subjects into the others by integrating. However, due to a seemingly limitless amount of standards in the Standard Course of Study, how does one choose the essential standards that are important to impart to students not only to fulfill your obligation as a teacher, but assist in creating a well-rounded and informed citizen of our society? I recognize that appreciating diversity and the culture of others allows our students to become ready for living harmoniously in a global society. I also understand the importance for learning the history of our country and its foundation in order to understand better the land in which they live.

As a result, I created a unit with a central theme of the Civil War, which allows my students to use various forms of writing to experience points of view of others during this historical period of time. In addition to being exposed to various primary and secondary sources, as well as historical fiction, I am hoping to transport my students to the Civil War era and walk in these various characters' shoes in order to make their writing and experience more authentic. My goal is for my students to be able to write to various forms of writing while learning about the events that began the Civil War, the impact slavery had on our country and how the war ended and changed our country. I hope to accomplish this goal by getting students excited about history and writing. I hope to leave them with an eagerness to learn more about the world around them, while using writing as a way to communicate important ideas, thoughts and feelings they want to share with the world.

Background

I teach a self-contained fifth grade class of 29 students at David Cox Road Elementary, which is located in one of the largest urban school districts in the country, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Our school has over 900 students, where kindergarten through fifth grade is taught. Approximately 55% of the student population receives free or reduced lunch. Our school philosophy is based on the Basic School model, which was created by Ernest L. Boyer. The Basic School philosophy is founded on four educational priorities: The School as a Community, A Curriculum with Coherence, A Climate for Learning, and A Commitment to Character. The Basic School views the parents as the first teacher and the teachers in the school are part of a continuum of learning throughout the child's life. Character education and development are also essential components of the Basis School philosophy.

I currently teach a fifth grade class, with five students who receive ESL services, and four students with Individualized Education Plans, who receive special education services. There are 7 Hispanics, 7 whites, and 15 African-American students in the classroom. There are 17 girls and 12 boys.

Strategies

Integrating Various Subjects through Social Studies

Integrating various subjects allows the time constraints we encounter as teachers to be maximized by using as many subjects areas weaved together to create an enhanced curriculum which captures the interests of the students. According to Lindquist and Selwyn, "an integrated curriculum is at the heart of a teaching approach that places social studies at the center of the curriculum...Discrete skills related to the various subjects and disciplines are still taught, but there is a consistent thread of content that keeps the learning focused."

Cooperative Learning Groups

Cooperative Learning Groups is a skill that not only helps students to process concepts and complete activities with peer help and guidance but allows the development of social skills, along with cooperation, team building, and leadership skills. Students can benefit from being exposed to the various ideas and thought processes of peers in order to assist in developing their own thought processes. I will use this strategy in my unit during the debate activity, in which the students will convene together to discuss issues that affect the side they are arguing for. They will need to discuss and choose the important issues that they will sway the opposing side to agree with their point of view.

Usage of Historical Fiction Books

The usage of historical fiction books to teach Social Studies bring the elements of fiction, and narrative into the context of a real historical occurrence. In my unit, I use powerful historical fiction books such as Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco and I, Dred Scott by Sheila P. Moses so that my students can create a story context in their minds using what they already know about characters, setting, and story in order to create new ideas in a historical context of learning of various cultures, places, and events in time. The story is more accessible as they are able to connect and relate to the characters in the books, yet learn about the climate and the way of life during the particular era in history. “Reading historical fiction provides students with a vicarious experience for places and people they could otherwise never know. Often, they are able to see history through a child’s point of view and identify with their emotions.”

Many historical concepts can be quite complex and abstract to young learners. It is important to use all learning styles in order to make the concepts understood and internalized. This strategy addresses the kinesthetic learners as well as creating a real life scenario in which the students will be able to make concrete connections to the concept. I use this strategy in the unit during activity one, in which the students will get an opportunity to act out from the point of view of slave children, as well as the children of the wealthy plantation owners. They will then write journal entries to write their feelings during the process.

Usage of Pictures, Graphs, and Diagrams

Using pictures, graphs, and diagrams are essential to students who may process information in other ways besides verbal and auditory. This strategy makes learning more concrete and also assists the English Language Learners in making connections to the difficult concepts and vocabulary they may encounter in their daily interaction with unknown or complex vocabulary. I use this strategy in my unit by showing various primary source photographs of various soldiers in the Civil War as well as the conditions of African American slaves during this time period. I also assist the students in using graphic organizers when using the various types of writing throughout the unit.

Summarizing and Note-Taking

It is important for students to learn the strategy of summarizing and note taking. Students need to know how to synthesize and process information in a meaningful way. They need to learn how to take a large amount of text and filter through it in order to find the

information that meets their needs. The students also need to be able to take the information and concisely list only the pertinent information into a summary. I will use this strategy in my unit during the final culminating research activity. The students will choose a specific topic or aspect of the Civil War era they would like to focus on. They will then begin to gather their resources and materials they will need for their project. After they have the materials, I will guide them through the process of how to take notes and select important information and facts and to discard the frivolous information. I will also do mini-lessons based on how to take the information they gather and summarize it into a cohesive paper.

Journal Writing

I will use this strategy throughout my unit in order to have my students respond to various prompts and ideas we discuss in class. I will use journal writing during my first activity, where the students will write the symbolic meaning of their adinkra cloth and why they chose their design. My students will also journal write during Activity 11 where they will choose a famous person from the Civil War time, share their contribution and write why they felt this person's contribution was important and why they admire them.

Classroom Activities

Introduction to Activities

I will begin my study of the Civil War from the perspectives of the Africans in their natural homeland before the Continental Slave trade. Using the principles of Mary Cowhey, she states, "Usually, history is taught from the perspective of powerful White men. We can rest assured that our students will get more than their fair share of that in their educational careers. I try turning history around, telling the story from the perspective of other groups whose voices we don't usually hear." Upon reading this statement, I commenced to figuratively throw out our history books (as well as my initial unit on the Civil War) and get to the "meat" of what truly happened during the American Civil War, with respect to the smaller groups and historical figures' historical perspectives we don't always hear about.

Activity 1- Africans at Home

The students will learn about two major African kingdoms of the time: the Yoruba and the Ashanti people. They will learn about their politics, culture, and religion and see the great wealth and power they had throughout the African continent. Various books I will

use to highlight these cultures are Anansi the Spider: a tale from the Ashanti, Zzzng! zzzng! zzzng! A Yoruba Tale and Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions. After researching the Ashanti and the Yoruba people, the students will use Venn Diagrams to find similarities and differences of what they learned about each group of people. As an art and math extension, the students will create their own “kente cloth” by using adinkra symbols commonly used by the Ashanti to make tessellations with stamps on contrasting colored paper. Using an adinkra symbol key, the students will write a short journal entry about what their cloth means to them, why they chose the particular symbols when they created their cloth, and who in their tribe would wear this particular design of kente cloth.

Activity 2- Africans in Captivity

The students will learn about the constant fighting and wars that occurred between the various African tribes. They will also learn about how the defeated tribes were sold into slavery by other Africans. The students will also find out that there were not just European slave traders, but Africans who captured and sold other Africans from enemy tribes into slavery. Using the picture book, The Old African, the students will then learn about the Slave trade or Middle Passage to the Americas, which included the conditions of the slave ship, how people of the same tribes were separated for fear of communication and revolts, and how many deaths resulted in the journey, as well as suicides and intentional self-inflicted starving in order to avoid going on the ship to America. (Please be aware that there are several graphic excerpts from this book. Please preview the book and use your discretion when reading it. However, I do encourage you to read this book for its rich content when describing the experience of many Africans.)At the end of the book, the Old African uses his magic he learned from his homeland to free the slaves. They journey back to their homeland and are united with the love ones they lost due to the Middle Passage. As a writing activity, the students will choose a person they would like to be reunited with that they may have lost in their lives. The students will recall what it was like to see their loved one and talk about the first thing they would say and talk about when they are reunited. They will learn about a slave auction and how families were separated and sold into slavery.

Activity 3-Declaration of Independence and Thomas Jefferson-Are we truly created equal?

We will discuss how the United States of America began and the document, the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson. We will analyze and discuss the document, looking at Jefferson’s first draft and the changes to the draft, which yielded what we now know as the Declaration of Independence. We will discuss the major

omissions which banned slavery and talked badly about the British and speculate as to why they think Jefferson allowed Congress and the other revisers to take out the section which would have abolished slavery. I will share with the students that although, “All men are created equal,” (according to Jefferson) he owned slaves as well and was opposed and urged to change the part of the Declaration of Independence stating blacks should be equal and free, with no practice of slavery in the United States. We will then create a piece of writing in which each student writes from the perspective of Jefferson’s good side and bad side, having a conversation with each other, as if they are different people.

Activity 4-Division at Home

I will start this activity by asking the students if they have siblings or cousins close to their age. Basing on their response, I will ask them if they ever had a big fight or disagreed with each other so strongly that they didn’t speak or didn’t talk to each other for an extended period of time. I will explain that the Civil war was very similar to this situation. We will discuss the Northern and Southern states and their stance on the rights. The Northern states believed the government had the final say in making decisions in the country and did not want slavery. The Southern states believed that each state should make decisions for them based on what is best for them and not the government, and they wanted slavery. Based on the election of Abraham Lincoln as president, the south decided to secede from the Union, thus causing the start of the Civil War.

We will begin by reading a short historical fiction novel entitled The Ballad of the Civil War. It is about twin brothers who grew up during the pre-Civil War era and grew up to fight for opposing sides of the war. We then began to discuss the history before the war and the economic differences between the North and the South. This in turn, will lead us up to the reasons the war began.

During this activity, the students will write journal entries from the perspective of a slave child and from the perspective of a plantation owner’s child. For one class period, I will break the class in half. One half of the class will be slaves and the other half will be the plantation owner’s children. In each half of the class, there will be a small group of four students, which will consist of two slaves and two plantation owners’ children. I will read a scenario to them and they will act out this scenario without words in which they will serve and be served, showing body language based on their position or status.

Scenario (Day 1): You are a slave that works in the master’s house. It is your job to whatever the children of the house ask you to do. You serve their food, prepare their

clothes, and even play with them, if they wish. Their parents bought you for their children in order to be companions and servants to their every need. Unfortunately, they are not very nice to you and today, they make you return their lunch three times. They are not satisfied with the food and complain that it's cold and tasteless. They leave a huge mess in the room and blame it on you. Unfortunately, you have to clean it up. You are not allowed to talk back or argue with the children. You could possibly get whipped and sent back to the fields.

After the quick exercise, I will bring them back to their desks. I will then share non-fiction biographical accounts of enslaved children and the plantation owners' children, highlighting their daily lifestyle, which would include rights and daily responsibilities. We will then do a writing session in which they share their feelings about what they felt, heard, saw and thought as a slave child. In addition, the students who had the opportunity to be the child of the master will write an account of their feelings, what they felt, heard, saw and thought as a slave child. We will then share these writings and discuss their feelings as we complete the activity. For homework, they will write another journal entry as a continuation of what they felt the next day. During the next class period, the students will switch places with a different scenario given to them act it out without sound, using only gestures and body language.

Scenario (Day 2): During the summer and the plantation owners' kids are playing outside with new toys. They are running freely around the yard outside of the field in their new clothes, laughing and playing. When they get tired, their slave maid brings them fresh glasses of cool lemonade and cookies as refreshments from the heat. The slave children watch the children play from the cotton fields while they work on a hot day with no water, wearing ripped soiled clothes and an overseer cracking the whip ferociously on the ground.

After the scenario, the students will write a journal entry from the perspective of their character remembering feelings, thoughts and including what they saw, heard or felt.

Then, we will discuss the differences of the two experiences and the fact that slavery still exists in places throughout the world including the United States. This serves as a connection to our world today.

Activity 5-Debate the pros and cons of Slavery

During this activity, the students will learn about the opposing sides of the South and North. They will learn how each side's economy was different and how the South

depended on slavery to produce their crops at minimal cost. The students will also learn how much a slave was worth and how the auctions were run. They will also learn each side's view of slavery and how it had impacted the feelings each side had for each other. After hearing information of both sides, the students will be assigned a side to debate. (There will be an assumption that most students will be against slavery. However, it is also important for students to write and debate for the other side, even if they don't believe in the issues. This will allow them to think about the point of view of the opposing side.) Once they are assigned their side, the students must brainstorm and come up with at least one reason why their side is right and why slavery should continue or desist. Once they have created a reason, they will meet with their colleagues and to share their points and possibly get more ideas to support their cause. At this time, they will begin to see a lot of commonalities and hopefully, the students who are stuck, can get some ideas for their writing time. After they share, the students will go back to prepare their arguments supporting their side of the slavery debate. Twelve students of the class (despite their side before the debate) will act as a jury. The debating students will try to convince the jury panel whether or not slavery should be continued to be allowed or if it should be stopped based on the arguments of each opposing side. Once written, the students will debate in front of the class. After the debate, the jury will be given a secret ballot in which they must share their view on slavery before the debate and their view on slavery after the debate. The team with the most votes will win, thus showing their capability of creating a convincing argument to the jury.

Activity 6- Writing a persuasive business letter trying to convince Judge Tanner to free Dred Scott from slavery

During this activity, we will learn about the Dred Scott vs. Stanford case during the Civil War time. We will discuss how important this case was and how it helped to fuel the Union side with evidence that slavery was an intolerable act. They will learn the factual circumstances of the case and how it was one of the first cases of its kind, which reached the Supreme Court. We will then read the book I, Dred Scott, which is a fictional narrative based on the life of Dred Scott and his struggle for freedom. As a class, we will write a persuasive business letter to Supreme Court Justice Tanner to convince him to free Dred Scott and allow him to have his life back as a freed man. During the entire process, I think it would be fun to hold the true verdict from the students, allowing their ideas and passions to fuel their arguments in their letters. After we have written, revised, published and shared the letters, I will share with them the outcome of the case, as well as Judge Tanner's true feelings about he case and slavery, as well as the country's reaction.

Activity 7-Harriet Beecher Stowe and Uncle Tom's Cabin- the Woman Who Started the Civil War

The students will learn about Harriet Beecher Stowe and her life by reading the book, A Picture Book of Harriet Beecher Stowe by David A. Adler. We will then discuss why she is known as the lady who started the Civil War and discuss how reading this book could change people's opinions about slavery and the treatment of Africans brought to America. I will then read certain excerpts from her book that made her famous, Uncle Tom's Cabin. I will provide each student with one to two pages of text from Uncle's Tom's Cabin and the students will create a found poem which will reflect what they felt after reading these pages and why it is so important to be free. A found poem is a poem created from an existing text, in which the person uses selected words from the text to create a poem. We will share and discuss our found poems and their personal significance to the author's choice of words.

Activity 8- Debate over the States

The students will learn about the nation's debate over slavery and the creation of new slave and free states. I will provide maps to show the slave states and free states and the territories which are in the process of becoming new states. We will discuss and learn about the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and Henry Clay, known as the "Great Compromiser", who devised this plan in order to keep the peace between the Northern and Southern states. We will also discuss the presidential candidates who are up for election: Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. The students will learn that Lincoln's election as the new president of the United States was the last straw for the Southern states, which in turn caused them to make the final decision to secede, and break away from the United States, or the Union. They formed a new nation, called the Confederate states of America, or the Confederacy. The Confederacy then elected their own president, Jefferson Davis, and founded their ideals as individual states making their own laws, as opposed to the federal government making the laws (Arnold, 2005). Lincoln gave them time to reconsider their secession before declaring a Civil war against the South. However, the Confederates would fire the first shot at Fort Sumter in South Carolina and the Civil war would begin. The students would then write in the journals how they felt about the start of the war and if they believed there was a way they could have avoided the start of the war.

Activity 9 -Writing a newspaper article reenacting a scene from the battlefield during the war

We will read actual accounts of soldier's experiences from the battlefield. We will learn about the lives and experiences of soldiers from the Union and Confederate sides. I will also discuss how this war produced the most deaths in American history and describe the battle scenes (deleted the most gory details from the fifth graders) in order to give them as many opportunities to visualize what the battlefields also looked like. I will share pictures of real battlefields, weapons, as well as uniforms each side wore. They will learn about the harsh conditions of the soldiers and the many cruelties they had to endure to fight this war. Then I will tell them that they are journalists from a newspaper in which their assignment is to write what they see on the battlefield. The visual depictions and photographs of the battlefields may help students to add details to their papers.

Activity 10-Jewish Point of View

Using excerpts from the novel, The War Within, the students will see the discrimination of not only African Americans, but the Jewish people when they are asked to leave their home because of their religion. They will also get to understand the point of view of a Southerner who supports the Confederacy and does not share the Union's views about slavery and the war. They will write in their journals from the perspective of a Jewish girl or boy growing up in this era and how they were affected during the war, using details from the novel.

Activity 11-Slave Revolts, Abolitionists, and the Underground Railroad

The students will learn about various unsung heroes who fought against the cruelties of slavery in various ways. One group we will explore are the famous and not-so famous slave revolts that took place throughout the United States, such as John Brown in Harper's Ferry, VA, Denmark Vesey in Charleston, SC, and Nat Turner in Southampton County, VA. They will also learn about abolitionist groups such as the Quakers, or the Society of Friends, as well as freed blacks who assisted in helping slaves escape to freedom in the north through the famous Underground Railroad. I will then read the book When Harriet Met Sojourner, based on a fictional account of what the author thought what may have happened at the supposed meeting of these two champions of freedom. The students will later choose their two favorite historical characters from this era and write a journal entry creating their own scenario about what would happen if their two people met. The students should include the qualities they admire and their important contributions each person made during this era in history, being sure to write in the style of the author.

Activity 12-Learn about Abraham Lincoln through a biographical sketch and poetry

We will learn about Abraham Lincoln's life and how he became an important political figure. We will also learn about one of the most important reasons the Civil War truly began-the Secession of the Confederate States and how the United States was in jeopardy of being separated into two nations. We will discuss his freeing of the slaves and his assassination, which was a low point in American history. We will also discuss that he was the first out of two presidents to be assassinated, in addition to John F. Kennedy. We will read a few excerpts from the book Chasing Lincoln's Killer and discuss the aftermath of his assassination. Once we have gathered enough information about Lincoln's life and connection to the Civil War, we will read a poem about him written by Vachel Lindsey. We will discuss this poem and how it shows Lincoln in another light. Then, the students will read several biographical sketches about various figures during the Civil War era such as Frederick Douglas, Jefferson Davis (President of the Confederation), Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Henry Clay, and Harriet Tubman. After reading these sketches, the students will take these facts they learned about their particular leader and write a poem about them which will illuminate their lives in a poetic fashion. (Tom Romano)

Activity 13- Analyzing the Emancipation Proclamation document

We will read excerpts from and discuss the Emancipation Proclamation and its function of freeing the slaves. We will also discuss why some slaves did not learn they were free until years later. We will also learn about certain slaves that chose not to leave their former owners after they were freed. We will discuss the celebration of "Juneteenth" and why it is celebrated today. After this discussion, the students will write from the perspective of the newly freed slave and discuss why they would leave or not leave their master's plantation in search of a new life.

Activity 14-The Gettysburg Address- The Three-Minute Speech

After reading excerpts from the book A Three Minute Speech: Lincoln's Remarks a Gettysburg and the picture book, The Gettysburg Address, we will discuss what these words mean to us and how this short speech marked the end of the Civil War at the Battle of Gettysburg. In small cooperative groups, the students will rewrite the Gettysburg Address in poster form, in order to interpret the speech and make it more accessible to them as 5th graders. Once they have written their translation, they will decorate and share their version of the Gettysburg Address with the class and display them.

Activity 15- Culminating Activity

The class will compile a Civil War newspaper with a featured piece of writing from each activity throughout the unit. Each student will choose their best writing from their various writings during the Civil War unit and include this writing in the class newspaper. The students will publish their papers in a newspaper template on the computer. Be sure to keep in mind that you must get at least one example of writing from every activity in order to have a well-rounded paper. This news paper will be shared and displayed during the publishing party referred to in Activity 16.

Activity 16-Personal Research Activity

The students will pick one aspect of the Civil War and create a research paper, brochure, or Glogster presentation based on their interest level. The students will be able to pick from suggested topics such as Buffalo Soldiers, important women in the Civil War, the Reconstruction era, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, specific battles during the Civil War, The Underground Railroad, or sharecropping. The students' interests will guide the topic for their final project. Before the writing of the research paper begins, students will pick a topic and then we will take a trip to the school media center in order for students to choose a book to begin their research. We will also use the internet to search topics in order to find pertinent information on the chosen topic. We will discuss which information is useful and what is not. Another session will be about how to take notes using the information and research found. The third lesson will be about using the notes to develop sentences and paragraphs in order to create a finished product. The fourth session will be about laying out the information, as well as visuals, to create a rough draft of the finished product. The final session will be publishing and sharing the final product, doing a gallery walk around the classroom with refreshments and reflections. The students will complete a self-evaluation of their participation in the finished product.

Resources

Children's Books Cited

Armstrong, Jennifer. *A Three-Minute Speech: Lincoln's Remarks at Gettysburg*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2003. This chronicles Lincoln's career and the development of the Gettysburg Address and the circumstances that led to its creation.

Arnold, James R. *The Civil War: Chronicles of America's Wars*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 2005. This is a non-fiction book which shares various important events during the war, including battles as well as historical data and photographs. This is a good source for content knowledge of the war.

Carson, Mary Kay. *The Underground Railroad for Kids: From Slavery to Freedom with 21 Activities (For Kids series)*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005.

This is a great resource for teachers which include factual information about slavery from its inception to freedom. It includes a helpful timeline, biographical sketches of important contributors during this time period and photographs, as well as activities teachers can do with their students.

Clinton, Catherine. *When Harriet Met Sojourner*. New York: Katherine Tegen Books, 2007. This story chronicles the lives of two American heroes who worked their magic during the Civil War era and hypothesizes what would have happened the day these two great heroes actually met.

Garland, Sherry. *The Buffalo Soldier*. Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006.

This story highlights the life of an African American soldier who wasn't able to fight alongside the white soldiers but was well respected and assisted the U.S. in winning many battles throughout American history.

Gershator, Phillis. *Zzzng! zzzng! zzzng!: a Yoruba tale*. New York: Orchard Books,

1998. This is the story of a mosquito in search of a true love but is cruelly snubbed by others. As a way of getting revenge, the mosquito becomes angry and bites people in remembrance of their cruelty.

Lester, Julius. *The Old African*. New York: Dial Books, 1995. This is a moving picture

book with powerful illustrations, heavy with text about the Middle Passage to America. It is the story of an enslaved African man who uses his spiritual powers to bring the other enslaved Africans back home. Please preview the text before reading to your students, since there are a few graphic parts which may be inappropriate for elementary students.

Lincoln, Abraham. *The Gettysburg Address*. Cookery: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 1995. This is a picture book which contains the Gettysburg Address of Abraham Lincoln with wonderful pictures reenacting scenes from the battles, slaves being freed, and the people of Gettysburg listening to the speech. It is a nice way to introduce the speech with wonderful black and white illustrations for the students to view as you read.

Matas, Carol. *The War Within: A Novel of the Civil War*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2001. This is a historical fiction story of a Jewish family who lived in the south and sided for the Confederates during the Civil War. General Grant issues an order which forces all Jewish families out of the commanding area, and are discriminated against based on their religion. This highlights another varying point of view during the war that was not well known.

McDermott, Gerald. *Anansi the Spider; a tale from the Ashanti*. New York: Holt,

Rinehart and Winston, 1972. This is an Ashanti tale of a popular character, Anansi, the spider. In this book, Anansi falls into trouble and is rescued by his six sons. His dilemma is which son to choose to give a beautiful prize as a reward for helping him to escape from peril.

Moses, Shelia P. I, *Dred Scott: A Fictional Slave Narrative Based on the Life and Legal Precedent of Dred Scott*. Chicago: Margaret K. Mcelderry, 2005. This book is fictional but is based on real events which happened during Dred Scott's life and during his trials which remarkably went to the Supreme Court. It gives a powerful look into his personal struggle toward freedom in a time when slaves were not considered to have a voice.

Polacco, Patricia. *Pink and Say*. New York: Philomel, 1994.

This story is a touching and powerful story, in which a young Union soldier runs away from battle and takes cover with a slave family and befriends a young slave boy. This touching relationships shows the power of friendship across color lines.

Polacco, Patricia. *January's Sparrow*. New York: Philomel, 2009.

This historical fiction novel is the story of an enslaved family who escaped to the northern state of Michigan to be free from slavery. However, they are always worried about slave catchers who are constantly on the lookout for runaway

slaves. This book portrays the constant battle between new-found freedom and the ugly possibility of being enslaved again.

Stolz, Mary. *A Ballad of the Civil War (Trophy Chapter Book)*. 1st Harper Trophy Ed.

New York: HarperTrophy, 1998. This story is a great depiction of how families and friendships were torn apart by the Civil War. It is a fictional story based on two twin brothers who despite their upbringing in a southern slave-owning household, they decide to part ways during the war because of opposing views about slavery and their treatment.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher and Amanda Claybaugh. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. New York:

Barnes and Noble Classics, 2003. This is a classic novel written right before the start of the Civil War to inform people of the cruelties of slavery.

Swanson, James L. *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2009.

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Appendix

Implementing District Standards

North Carolina Social Studies Standards

My unit ties in cohesively with the North Carolina Social Studies Standards in various ways. During activities 3 and 13, we will implement standard 2.01, (Analyze major documents that formed the foundations of the American idea of constitutional

government) in activities 3 and 13, where we will analyze the Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation.

I will implement Standard 3.01(Locate and describe people of diverse ethnic and religious cultures, past and present, in the United States) in activities 1 and 2, which the students learn about the African culture and their ways of life before and after slavery and activity 10, where they learn about the Jewish population living during this era and how they were affected by the war.

I will implement Standard 4.05 (Describe the impact of wars and conflicts on United States citizens, including but not limited to, the Civil War, etc.) throughout my unit which covers the span of the Civil War of the Americas.

North Carolina Language Arts Standards

I will implement Standard 2.03 (Read a variety of texts) throughout our unit by exposing the students to various historical fiction novels, non-fiction accounts of Civil War battles and historical documents.

I will implement Standard 3.01 (Respond to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama using interpretive, critical, and evaluative processes) by having the students analyze characters and their motivations, traits while reading various texts containing different fictional and non-fictional characters.

I will implement Standard 4.02 (Use oral and written language to evaluate information and ideas, present and support arguments and influence the thinking of others) in activities 6 in which they must write a persuasive business letter and in activity 8, where they debate over the conflict of the states.

I will implement Standard 4.09 (Produce work that follows the conventions of particular genres (e.g., essay, feature story, business letter) by reading and writing various types of writing, while understanding how each type of writing has its own purpose. This is shown throughout my unit, but more specifically in activities 6, 7, and 9.

I will implement Standard **4.10** (Use technology as a tool to enhance and/or publish a product.) throughout the unit, by using computers for word processing, Glogster for virtual posters for the individual research project in activity 16 and templates for our culminating Civil War newspaper activity 15.

