

## **The Story Behind the Storyteller: Getting to Know the Person Behind the Ink**

### **Lakeirra DeShaun Booth**

We live in a society in which having a Global Point System allowing others to know your location and blogging allowing others to know your thoughts are the norm. Wish to know a person's thoughts or where a bouts, follow them on Twitter, friend them on Facebook or Four Square. Interested in seeing the world through the lens of another, follow them on Instagram. In an informational thirsty society containing multiple individuals who wish to expose themselves and the lives of others or live in a fish bowl and have their lives ridicule by others, it's amazing that many of us tend to know little about artist of the past. In many circumstances people of all ages are more willing to open up and share with the world rather than share with one particular confidant.

### **Background**

Once a needle in a haystack, working diligently to shine as bright as possible in order to stand out in this large urban school district, my school is now a Honors School of Excellence, meeting all federal No Child Left Behind goals. There are over 1100 students representing 32 nationalities, enrolled in my school which encompasses three programs, International Baccalaureate MYP (1), Exceptional Children and Horizons. According to the International Baccalaureate website, IB is a non-profit educational foundation founded in 1968 that is motivated by its mission, focused on the student. The IB Programme has three academic programmes, Primary Years Programme, the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme. A student attending this school benefits from all programs by actively participating in the components of the IB program which heightens critical thinking, gaining an understanding of issue that impact the world and developing a true concept of the role individuals with disabilities play in the school and the community at large. Randolph has a Professional Development Partnership with University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Some other demographic of the school are 49% female, 48% free or reduced lunch, 71% minority population, 93.5% of students are at or above grade level in mathematics and reading.

During this school year I have one Exceptional Children Inclusion class which consists of a total of 27 students of various academic levels and exceptionalities. This is my most academically diverse class, according to the state standardized test five students test below grade level, eight are labeled as Academically Intelligent/Gifted and two are English Language Learners. Members of this class are very active in school and community organization and are doing a very good job of balancing both the social and

academic and social aspect of school. They are active in organization such as Power of Girls, The National Academic League, Girls and Boys Scout, National Junior Honor Society and sports. I provide Differentiated Instructions such as giving my lower level students guided formats for essay writing and creating novel studies or packets that consist of novel of various Lexile Levels allowing the students choose the novel they wish to read, while encouraging and suggesting students to read novels that are age and academically appropriate. A numerous amount of these students are avid readers, however there are a great amount of reluctant readers for those I have suggested The Bluford series and Sharon Drapper novels, these are novels I have used in the pass to encourage reluctant readers. Although they are bright students 40 percent states that they struggle with reading comprehension, for which I have suggested that they identify the 5ws and How (Who-What-When-Where-Why and How), SQ3R and Questioning the Author (QtA) when reading. Eighty percent of the students in the class state that writing is also a concern therefore I implement standard grammar, graphic organizers, Writing to Learn, RAFT and other writing activities daily. According to the Council for Exceptional Children, Inclusion (2) used to describe the philosophy that each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, should be educated in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. Inclusion involves bringing support services to the child rather than having the child being educated in a self contained classroom.

### **Rationale for unit**

Inquisitive by nature, always having the need and desire to know more than what is presented, I chose the Reading African American Lives seminar because the subject matter speaks to my heart, mind and soul. For the past three years I have taught an interdisciplinary unit based on the Harlem Renaissance, a time period when African American artistic endeavors were highlighted, explored and glorified. However, I never truly took time to explore why various novels, poetic pieces or artistic expressions were written or created.

Within this unit I wish to assist my students with exploring the lives of African Americans mentioned in our 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts textbook, artists such as Nikki Giovanni, Walter Dean Myers, Virginia Hamilton as well as many others I wish to introduce during the 2012/2013 school year. In addition to their literary achievement, there are interesting back stories or moments Behind the Scenes that are essential to a more thorough understanding of a given writer. As a native of Belle Glade, FL, I knew of the devastating hurricane mentioned in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* because it is a historical event that took place in my hometown and surrounding area. The event is memorialized through a statue on the grounds City Hall in my hometown. English Language Arts is a course that encompasses many components such as reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing; however, I wish to move my students beyond the general components of Language Arts and allow them to be

empowered by having a clear understanding of the aspects of an artist's life that influence them to create various pieces. To better understand what I wish to do with this unit I must first gain an understanding of the many components of biographical exploration.

### **Strategies to be implemented during CTI unit**

We will cover an author from the list below every month throughout the school year. Names of authors and resources of those to be studied are: Virginia Hamilton, Nikki Giovanni, Walter Dean Myers, Maya Angelou, Albert Duckett, Toni Cade Bambara, Langston Hughes and Jackie Torrence.

As part of a technologically advanced generation, pencil and paper is not sufficient as the primary resource for my students, therefore I must incorporate technology or innovative tools whenever possible. I wish to employ multiple strategies and instructional tools during the course of this unit. This unit will consist of multiple assignments that require technology or mini project component with each author such as creating a photo story, blogging, power point, web quest, collage, etc.

As an educational professional I make a conscious effort to expose both myself and my students to activities that will enhance our educational experience and desire to learn. A true educational experience extends beyond the walls of an educational institution. Education should extend beyond the concrete of an academic facility that has been termed "an academic setting"; it should also be community based. I believe community based learning to be the most effective in impacting students learning. This area requires them to go above and beyond the realm of their regular academic endeavors. A student has not truly met or mastered an objective unless that individual is able to apply what has been taught to real life experiences. While enthralled in the lives of the author's covered during this unit, I will implement a letter writing component. Students will write letters to Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni and Walter Dean Myers as well as write letters to the foundations or the family members of Virginia Hamilton, Langston Hughes, Jackie Torrence and Toni Cade Bambara. Jackie Torrence was born in Chicago but spent most of her childhood in Second Creek, North Carolina, near Salisbury. She attended Livingstone College where she was a member of the Drama Club. After returning to North Carolina after a failed marriage she resided in Quarry, NC. She began her story telling career in High Point, NC.

### **Goal/Objective and Common Core State Standards of English Language Arts**

Prior Knowledge – Communication, which consists of speaking, listening and writing, is a part of our daily academic regiment in this course. We have been studying effective problem solving, critical thinking, grammar, persuasive and argumentative writing techniques since the start of the school term. Communication is enhanced through our daily Warm-Up. Students write an argumentative essay monthly, there is an active on-going writing portfolio kept on all students. During corporative learning and group activities students write an essay as a group.

Focusing on all Five Strands of English Language Arts as well as the Common Core State Standards of English Language Arts, my long-term goals for this unit are five-fold. First, to enhance communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, while second, improving student's ability to express individual perspectives, third, increase vocabulary skills, fourth, refine critical thinking and argumentative skills and last, increase grammatical skills and language usage. My long-term goal of communication is extremely vital for these students who are college bound and future leaders of their communities and professions, serving in these various competencies they must be able to effectively communicate in both a verbal and non-verbal manner, therefore I must take an active role as the form their communication foundation.

My writing goal for this unit is that each student will write an argumentative essay that encompasses the key components of an effective Argumentative Essay. The paper opens with an interesting introduction and the appropriate audience is address throughout the paper. The writer takes a clear position on an issue and supports it with appropriate examples, personal or factual information. Include numerous specific and interesting details that more than adequately supports position. The paper is written in a manner that demonstrates organization and focus that is logical and consistent. The essay ends with a call to action in the closing. A variety of sentence patterns are used. Writing allows an opportunity for the student to brainstorm, utilize and develop reasoning and elaboration skills.

According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (3) website Common Core State Standards is a state-led initiative coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and experts, to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare children for college and the workforce. Consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live. The evidence based standards align with college and work expectations, are clear, understandable and consistent as it relates to the academic needs and benchmarks of students. CCSS Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills. They build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards and they are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society.

## Teaching Strategies

### Active Reading Strategies

The Active Readers reads for a purpose and goal, uses the structure of text for an overview and selects a focus and a process, to create meaning and develop understanding, to remember selective parts as well as for more than a summary or description. Within every mini-unit students will be taught and employ a minimum of two Active Reading Strategies.

### Language Arts Middle-School Energizers (4)

According to the East Carolina University Activity Promotion Laboratory website and booklet in January of 2003, the State Board of Education passed the Healthy Active Children Policy (HSP-S-000). This policy provides schools with guidance for local school districts to promote coordinated school health programs, and emphasizes physical education and physical activity components. In April 2005, the State Board of Education revised the policy to mandate that schools provide a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity for all K-8 students daily. It is through the support of NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund, NC Healthy Schools, Be Active North Carolina, Inc., NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NCAHPERD), NC Department of Public Instruction and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch who allowed East Carolina University (ECU) to write, pilot, and develop the Energizers for daily use by classroom teachers. ECU has tried to design activities and movements that middle school students will feel comfortable performing. To help develop age-and content-appropriate activities, ECU's team of physical activity specialists collaborated with a group of middle school teachers from the following content areas: math, language arts, science, music, health and physical education, and social studies. After the Middle School Energizers were developed, they were sent to middle school teachers throughout the state for pilot testing. The feedback from middle school teachers was then used to revise the Middle School Energizers to their final form.

### Socratic Seminars

Socratic Seminars will be implemented throughout the course of the course of the unit to gain an insight of the students' perspective on the information being presented in the various formats. The lesson is conducted using Paideia Seminar (5), which is a great tool for fostering students' participation in the whole class interaction. The National Paideia Center, which has developed extensive materials on using seminars in classrooms, defines a Socratic seminar as a 'collaborative, intellectual dialogue facilitated with open-ended questions about a text.' According to the National Paideia Center's website, Paideia increases students' factual recall, develops students' literacy skills and strengthens students' conceptual understanding. This is done through didactic instruction which

increases students' factual recall, intellectual coaching which develops students' literacy skills and seminar dialogue which strengthens students' conceptual understanding. Seminar is a student lead activity during which I serve as facilitator.

These strategies are appropriate for my students because it allows them an opportunity to enhance peer interaction, writing skills, verbal communication, problem solving and critical thinking skills. As stated on the website the purpose of a Socratic Seminar is to achieve a deeper understanding about the ideas and values in a text. In the Seminar, participants systematically question and examine issues and principles related to a particular content, and articulate different points-of-view. The group conversation assists participants in constructing meaning through disciplined analysis, interpretation, listening, and participation. In a Socratic Seminar, the participants carry the burden of responsibility for the quality of the discussion. Good discussions occur when participants study the text closely in advance, listen actively, share their ideas and questions in response to the ideas and questions of others, and search for evidence in the text to support their ideas. The discussion is not about right answers; it is not a debate. Students are encouraged to think out loud and to exchange ideas openly while examining ideas in a rigorous, thoughtful, manner. The classroom should be arranged so that students can look at each other directly.

#### Cooperative Learning Groups

Many of the lessons will be conducted using Cooperative Learning which is effective for this lesson because the students feel safe as well as challenged, the groups are small, containing no more than five students, enough so that everyone could contribute and their task while working together was clearly defined. According to Kennasaw State University educational website Cooperative Learning (6) is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it. Research has shown that cooperative learning techniques, promote student learning and academic achievement, increase student retention, enhance student satisfaction with their learning experience, help students develop skills in oral communication, develop students' social skills and promote student self-esteem and help to promote positive race relations.

Within this section of the unit groups consist of five members in a group each student will be given a role during group activities. The roles are to be determined by the group members roles are to include a reporter, parliamentarian/facilitator, organizer, researcher/historian and supervisor. The reporter's role in the group is to report to the instructor any issues within the group that cannot be worked out or managed by group members. The parliamentarian/facilitator is in charge of keeping harmony within the group and making sure everyone plays an active role within the group as well as

making sure members are not socializing outside of the group. The organizer's role entail keeping up with group assignments and materials as well as making sure the group presentation are done in a professional manner. The researcher/historian's is in charge of making sure the group is doing all assignments correctly and following all directions. They act as the fact checker. The supervisor's role is to have a clear understanding of everyone's position and to assist in all areas as needed or as determined by the group. The students were placed in groups based on class performance, Lexile level and their ability to work well with the individuals within their group.

Allowing students to select the members of their Cooperative Learning group enhances their feeling of being a decision maker in their learning process as well as enhancing their thoughts of feeling free and safe to express their opinions and views on the subject at hand. Cooperative Learning is positioned within the Social Constructivist model. Students work on projects or problems in teams with both personal and team accountability for conceptual understanding. Cooperative Learning enhances student learning by providing a shared cognitive set of information between students, motivating students to learn the material, insuring that students construct their own knowledge, providing formative feedback, developing social and group skills necessary for success outside the classroom, and promoting positive interaction between members of different cultural and socio-economic groups. These strategies are appropriate for my students because it allows them an opportunity to enhance peer interaction, verbal communication, problem solving and critical thinking skills while giving them an opportunity to hear various perspectives and justifications regarding the topic at hand. Allowing them the opportunity to discuss things of interest such as music, poetry, art and along with enhancing their comprehension of historical elements are important to my students because it exposes them to educational opportunities they have not been privy to in the past.

### Questioning Techniques

Questions are a influential way of engaging in learning, establishing and building relationships, providing organization or instruction within groups, avoiding misunderstanding, obtaining clarification, resolving problems and persuading others. Within every mini-unit I will teach a different Questioning Technique or Strategy.

### Speech Analysis

The Speech Analysis consists of three parts of A. Background Information: 1, Who is the speaker? 2., What is the title of the speech? 3., When was the speech delivered? 4., Where was the speech delivered? (location, event, occasion) 5., Who is the intended audience of the speech? and 6. Are there additional things we should know about the background or the occasion? B. Content and Persuasive Analysis : 1. What is the tone of

the speech?, 2. What is the purpose/objective of the speech? and 3. What is the overall persuasive technique used in the speech? Use evidence from the speech to support your answer. C. Emotional, Logical and Ethical Appeal: 1. What evidence can you find of this persuasive technique in the speech? How effective was this speech as a persuasive speech? Why? GIVE REASONS! In your opinion, is this a “Great Speech”? Please explain your answer with specific reasons.

### Letter Writing

Students will write letters to Maya Angelou, Nikki Giovanni and Walter Dean Myers as well as write letters to the foundations or the family members of Virginia Hamilton, Langston Hughes, Jackie Torrence and Toni Cade Bambara.

### WebQuest

Incorporating the internet, research and critical thinking skills as well as technology, students will complete a WebQuest individually. A WebQuest is an inquiry based learning activity in which some or all of the information and resources regarding the activity can be found online. All the information regarding the web quest and resources needed by the student to complete this assignment can be found online. The WebQuest used in the unit was developed by this teacher.

### Kids Blog

According to the website Kidblog (7) it is built by teachers, for teachers, so students can get the most out of the writing process. Their mission is to empower teachers to embrace the benefits of the coming digital revolution in education. As students become creators - not just consumers - of information, we recognize the crucial role of teachers as discussion moderators and content curators in the classroom. With Kidblog, teachers monitor and control all activity within their classroom blogging community. Students can access their class blog from my wikispaces,

<http://lakeirradeshaunbooth.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/CLASS+BLOGS> (8), there are four different blogs, ALL CLASSES - Miss Booth's Class

<http://kidblog.org/MissBoothsClass/> (9), MISS LAKEIRRA DESHAUN BOOTH'S FIRST BLOCK

<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSFIRSTBLOCK/> (10) , MISS LAKEIRRA DESHAUN BOOTH'S SECOND BLOCK

<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSSCONDBLOCK/> (11), MISS LAKEIRRA DESHAUN BOOTH'S THIRD BLOCK

<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSTHIRDBLOCK/> (12)

### Argumentative Writing

Argument communication is one focus of English Language Arts, Common Core Standards as well as the SAT, which some of my student begin taking during the Fall.



Continuing to build on the foundation of argument, students focus on the importance of the effective use of language and examine how an argument is affected by style and tone. Students demonstrate that they can focus on an argumentative writing task by organizing their thoughts so that their writing progresses logically; by providing sufficient support and elaboration to present their ideas clearly; and, by skillfully controlling their writing so that it is appropriate to the purpose, the audience, and the context of the writing task. Students are prepared for this assessment through studying a variety of argumentative works; by learning to analyze problems and solutions in various contexts and situations; and by creating arguments that evaluate by justifying judgments with logical relevant reasons, clear examples, and supporting details.

## Mini- Units

### Virginia Hamilton

Prior to reading students will conduct research on Virginia Hamilton using the Virginia Hamilton interactive website, <http://www.virginiahamilton.com/> (13). After reading Hamilton's biography students will answer the following questions using the R.A.C.E. Responding to Open-Ended Questions technique: 1. Why is this person famous?, 2. Discuss three to four personality traits that helped make this person achieve his or her goal. 3., What are two to three problems this person had to overcome? 4., What about this person do you feel enabled him or her to realize personal hopes and dreams? 5., Were there people and/or events that helped this person realize his or her dream? Select two and show how each influenced the person. 6., What do you admire or dislike about this person? Explain your position. 7., How are you and this person alike? Different? Give specific examples in your discussions. and 8. How did this person affect the lives of other people during his or her time? During our time?

Students will view the Youtube video, Meet Virginia Hamilton <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyP5ZOMEn6c> (14). Students will read short story *The People Could Fly* (15) as well as the poem *Under the Back Porch* (16). After reading *The People Could Fly* they will watch the Youtube videos *The People Who Could Fly Part 1* and *Part 2*. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-pfgP19I\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-pfgP19I_s) (17) and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXyTkxDoY3Y&feature=endscreen&NR=1> (18). Students will compare the version of the story written by Virginia Hamilton to the play performed by Umoja Sasa at Walters Art Gallery. After reading the students will answer the following questions about the folktale: 1. What problems does the main character face? Do you feel these problems are realistic? Why? Why not?, 2. Describe three or four settings and show how each influences the events and characters' actions and

decisions. Would similar settings have influenced you in the same way? Explain. , 3. What about the main character is realistic in terms of your experiences? , 4. What about two to three minor characters is realistic in terms of your experiences? and 5. What problems and conflicts in this text are realistic?

Using the internet and books, students will research to gather information about African American oral tradition as told through griots as well as explain their role in the African American culture. Student will create an information postcard based on their findings.

### *Open and Closed Questions*

Closed-Ended Questions can be answer with one word, a short phrase or a simple yes or no response. Closed-Ended questions gives you facts, are easy to answer, are quick to answer and they allow the questioner to remain in control of the conversation. Open-Ended questions ask the respondent to think and reflect, allow the respondent to give their opinions and feelings as well as gives control of the conversation to the respondent.

### R.A.C.E. Responding to Open-Ended Questions

- Restate the question
- Answer all parts of the question
- Cite details and support from the text
- Extend to themselves, another text, or to the world

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Ask yourself pre-reading questions. For example: What is the topic, and what do you already know about it? Why has the instructor assigned this reading at this point in the semester? Make outlines, flow charts, or diagrams that help you to map and to understand ideas visually.

### *Language Arts Energizers*

Students will complete their Airplane Prepositions activity while standing at their desk. Each student will need one sheet of paper. The rules and directions are 1. Using notebook paper, students to create a paper airplane., 2. Teacher decides how many students throw their planes at one time., 3. Students throw the plane and monitor its path., 4. Students describe and act out the flight of their plane using a prepositional phrase to a partner (e.g., “My plane flew over the desk and around the chair.”). and 5. Using the following movements, imitate the flight path for 10-15 seconds each. Around – students spins around, Under – students squat, Over – students pretend to climb and Through – students pretend to swim or dive.

Nikki Giovanni

### *Funnel Questions*

Funnel questioning seeks further information either that goes into more specific detail or becomes more general. According to Psychwiki.com funnel questioning involves inquiring further information into a specific subject by asking general questions first, then homing in at the subject at hand. Usually open-ended questions are used to create a narrative with general information like "why" or "how" then progressed to close-ended questions to extract concrete answers like "yes" and "no".

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Teach what you have learned to someone else! Research clearly shows that teaching is one of the most effective ways to learn. If you try to explain aloud what you have been studying, 1. you'll transfer the information from short-term to long-term memory, and 2. you'll quickly discover what you understand — and what you don't. Identify and define any unfamiliar terms.

Prior to reading students will conduct research prior to reading students will conduct research on Nikki Giovanni using the Nikki Giovanni interactive website, <http://www.nikki-giovanni.com/> (19). After reading Giovanni's biography students will answer the following questions using the R.A.C.E. Responding to Open-Ended Questions technique: 1. Why is this person famous?, 2. Discuss three to four personality traits that helped make this person achieve his or her goal. 3., What are two to three problems this person had to overcome? 4., What about this person do you feel enabled him or her to realize personal hopes and dreams? 5., Were there people and/or events that helped this person realize his or her dream? Select two and show how each influenced the person. 6., What do you admire or dislike about this person? Explain your position. 7., How are you and this person alike? Different? Give specific examples in your discussions. and 8. How did this person affect the lives of other people during his or her time? During our time?

### *The World Is Not a Pleasant Place*

Student will view the Nikki Giovanni Reading Rainbow Biography and interview on Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Efhxc4iM4FY> (20) and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPndtZnyRfo> (21).

We will read, listen to and analyzes the songs and poems the picture book *Hip Hop Speaks to Children* (22) by Nikki Giovanni. After analyzing the text within the book students will select a poem or musical excerpt written by your favorite artist in the book. Each student will write a brief paragraph regarding their interpretation of the poem or musical selection and their reasoning for selecting this particular piece. Write a brief bio about the creator of their selection.

### *Language Arts Middle-School Energizers*

Poetry Round-Up is to be done as a Whole or Small Group. Materials used for this activity are Index cards, a poem on each index card write one line from the selected poem. Dependent upon the length of poem, this activity may involve the entire class or divide the class into small groups and use shorter poems. The rules and directions of this game is as follows: 1. Give each student an index card with a line from the poem., 2. Students move around the room to determine the order of the poem (it is easier with a short, rhyming poem). and 3. Once students have the order, they stand in line and recite the poem, each participant saying his/her line while completing a physical activity (e.g., hopping on one foot etc.). Variations for this activities are 1. Place each line of the poem on separate strips of paper. Place the paper strips in an envelope or hat and let the students randomly select one strip of paper., 2. Use a transparency to show the final organization., 3. If you do small groups, put the lines from the same poem on matching colored index cards. and 4. If using a long poem uses stanzas instead of one line on the index cards.

Walter Dean Myers

### *Probing Questions*

Probing is asking follow-up questions when we do not fully understand a response, when answers are unclear or ambiguous or when we want to obtain more specific or in-depth information.

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Write a summary of an essay or chapter in your own words. Do this in less than a page. Capture the essential ideas and perhaps one or two key examples. This approach offers a great way to be sure that you know what the reading really says or is about.

### *Language Arts Energizers*

Classroom Fables are conducted as students stand by their desk. No materials are needed for this activity. The rules and directions are 1. The teacher reviews various sentence parts., 2. The teacher lists various sentence parts on the chalk board, along with corresponding physical activities for each sentence part: Article - hop on 1 foot 5 times, Noun - walk in place 5 paces, Verb - jog in place 5 steps, Adverb - touch elbow to knee 5 times, Adjective - 5 jumping jacks, Pronoun - 5 squats, Preposition - 5 knee lifts and Conjunction - 5 toe touches, 3. The student who sits in the first seat on the first row of desks says one word to begin a sentence (i.e., "The")., 4. All students complete the corresponding activity for that sentence part., 5. The 2nd student in that row then adds

another word (i.e., “green”) and students complete the corresponding activity for that sentence part. and 6. This continues going down each row so that the class creates their own silly story, each student adding one word at a time to form a sentence.

### Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary

Prior to reading *Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary* (23) students will conduct research prior to reading students will conduct research on Walter Dean Myers using the Walter Dean Myers interactive website, <http://www.walterdeanmyers.net/> (24). After reading Giovanni’s biography students will answer the following questions using the R.A.C.E. Responding to Open-Ended Questions technique: 1. Why is this person famous?, 2. Discuss three to four personality traits that helped make this person achieve his or her goal. 3., What are two to three problems this person had to overcome? 4., What about this person do you feel enabled him or her to realize personal hopes and dreams? 5., Were there people and/or events that helped this person realize his or her dream? Select two and show how each influenced the person. 6., What do you admire or dislike about this person? Explain your position. 7., How are you and this person alike? Different? Give specific examples in your discussions. and 8. How did this person affect the lives of other people during his or her time? During our time?

Students will view the Reading Rockets Walter Dean Myers video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soueMVStVzs> (25), as well as the segments of Malcolm X: Make it Plain [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7D2-b\\_zXPKU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7D2-b_zXPKU) (26). Martin Luther King Jr. is viewed as the positive protagonist during the Civil Rights Movement however; Malcolm X to many was and is viewed as Martin’s vicious opposite, the violent, angry antagonist during Civil Rights Movement but do what they truly know about Malcolm X. Students will view Malcolm’s By Any Mean Necessary speech on Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhg6LxyTnY8> (27). Students will be given the transcript of this speech to conduct a Speech Analysis.

### Maya Angelou

#### *Leading Questions*

A leading question is a question which subtly prompts the respondent to answer in a particular way. Leading questions are generally undesirable as they result in false or slanted information.

#### *Active Reading Strategy*

Write your own exam question based on the reading. Bracket the main idea or thesis of the reading, and put an asterisk next to it. Pay particular attention to the introduction or opening paragraphs to locate this information.

### *Language Arts Energizer*

The activity Comparing and Contrasting are conducted as students stand by their desk. The list of movements from the Movement Bank can be used during this activity. The rules and directions are 1. Ask students to stand at their desks., 2. Teacher lists several activities from the Movement Bank on the board., 3. Teacher makes a statement using language appropriate for comparing (e.g., "In The Outsiders, Ponyboy and Dallas are Greasers.") and contrasting (e.g., "In The Outsiders, the Socs and Greasers are from different worlds."), 4. Students volunteer to identify whether the statement is comparing or contrasting., 5. If the student answers correctly he/she will choose a movement for the entire class to perform. Students can create their own movement or choose one from the board. and 6. Students should perform the movement for 30 seconds, and then the next statement can be read.

### Encounter with Martin Luther King Jr.

Students will view the Biography Channel Mini Bio on Youtube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyHqafC740Q> (28). After viewing the video students will read the story Encounter with Martin Luther King Jr. within their Cooperative Learning Group. On August 28, 1963 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., gave his "I Have A Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. As a class we will view King's I Have a Dream speech on Youtube, after viewing the video each student will be given a transcript of the speech and must complete a Speech Analysis on the speech working independently.

Albert Duckett

### *Rhetorical Questions*

A question is "rhetorical" if it is asked merely for effect with no answer expected. The purpose of this figure of speech is not to secure a response but to assert or deny a point implicitly. A rhetorical question may serve as a subtle way of insinuating an idea that might be challenged by an audience if asserted directly.

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Read each paragraph carefully and then determine "what it says" and "what it does." Answer "what it says" in only one sentence. Represent the main idea of the paragraph in your own words. To answer "what it does," describe the paragraph's purpose within the

text, such as “provides evidence for the author’s first main reason” or “introduces an opposing view.”

### *Language Arts Energizer*

Factual Chairs is an activity that will be done as students are stationed throughout the classroom with activity from the Movement Bank. The rules and directions are 1. Ask students to line up around the circle of chairs., 2. Students begin walking around the chairs as statements are made., 3. Teacher states factual information from the text (this could serve as a review)., 4. When a false statement is made, students find a seat., 5. This should also be done as musical chairs by removing a chair each time. However, it is important to have activity stations throughout the room so there is no elimination, but review while at an activity station. (ex. once you lose a seat, you go to a station which has review questions and exercises as the other continue.) After each chair comes out, everyone can rejoin the game. and 6. Repeat until review is complete.

According to the New York Times Obituary section (29) Duckett, a poet, an author and business man, assisted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with speeches such as “I Have a Dream” as well as the novel, “Why We Can’t Wait”. There is very little research Duckett. He died of cancer at the age of 67 in October of 1984.

Students will read The Noble Experiment Jackie Robinson after reading the text we will conduct a Socratic Seminar focusing on the questions: When is there Dignity in silence? and What makes a person a Trailblazers? We will then view Biography Channel’s Jackie Robinson’s Mini-Bio on Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILIA20AqA5I> (30).

Students will create an autobiography using the guidelines of their All About Me project.

Create a portfolio project that contains each of the following elements:

#### Description

Describe YOU! In a letter to your teacher, tell them everything about you. List things that you like, dislike, what you do in your spare time, who your friends are, what you want to do with your future, your ideas on education and school, ANYTHING about you that you would like to share. Describe your characteristics and features. Think about how your friends and family would describe you. What are your most important attributes and qualities? Focus on you! Remember to organize your thoughts before you begin writing. You may want to plan and draft a copy before you create your final copy to submit. You could organize this in several ways. If you are confused about how to organize your paper, please come see me.

## Sequence

Create a timeline of your life. Start with your birthday and continue on. Your timeline should have 15-25 major events that have occurred in your life until the present AND 5-10 events that you predict will happen in the future. Picture yourself 10 years from now and include this in your timeline. Think of and include things that are monumental. You may have to ask family and friends to help you remember events from your childhood. Your timeline should include: 1. Dates., 2. Captions explaining what happened on these dates (written in complete sentences)., 3. Pictures (MUST be in chronological order).

## Compare and Contrast

Research two universities or colleges that you would like to attend upon graduation. Find out everything you can about these two colleges or universities. For example: 1. Extracurricular Activities, 2. Majors offered, 3. Cost, 4. Campus living, 5. Sports and 6. Location and distance from home. When you have completed your research, create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the two schools. Ask yourself: What is it about them that I should compare? What characteristics should I use to make a comparison? What characteristics do they have in common? How are they alike? How are they different? Be sure to include at least 8 key differences and 10 similarities. Write in complete sentences.

## Cause and Effect

I want you to think of a time that you did something, good or bad, which had an effect on the people around you. Create a graphic organizer that illustrates this decision and the effects that it had on those people and yourself. Finally, write a 200 or more words essay describing these events.

OR...

I want you to think of a time that you made a decision, good or bad, for which you had several reasons for doing it. Create a graphic organizer that illustrates this decision and the causes that made you reach this decision. Finally, write a 200 or more words essay describing these events.

## Problem and Solution

Consider one problem that you know you will face in the future. For example, it may be paying for college tuition, finding a good job, being successful in high school, whether you should go to college or the military, or achieving an athletic goal in your life. In a three paragraph essay, explain what the problem is and why it will be a problem for you in the future. Then, explore two possible solutions to the problem along with what you can do NOW, and lists the pros and cons of each solution. Make sure your reasoning is convincing.



## Spatial Order

Write an essay or poem to describe the setting of your favorite indoor place to someone who has never seen it. Help the reader see, hear, smell, and taste the described place.

OR...

Many television shows are devoted to helping people envision a dream home. Imagine one of these shows has agreed to build your dream home. In a letter, describe the dream home to the show's producer so they will build exactly the home you want.

Toni Cade Bambara

### *Higher Order Thinking Questions Higher Order Processing and Comprehension*

According to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website the New Essential Standards are written using the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (31) to help move North Carolina students to the complex thinking expected from 21st Century graduates. Lorin Anderson, a former student of Bloom assisted in the revision process of Bloom's Taxonomy. The titles of the six layered components of Bloom's Taxonomy were changed from nouns to verbs which represents an active learner and process.

### *Language Arts Energizer*

During Latin Groove students will walk throughout the classroom. The rules and directions are 1. Students begin to walk around room., 2. Teacher calls out a prefix, suffix, or root. Bi-Geo-Ent-Phyaanaf-, 3. Students call back a word with that root., 4. Teacher chooses one of the words that were identified by the students. 5. Students stop walking and begin doing the movement selected by the teacher (refer to Movement Bank). and 6. Students continue movement at least 10-15 seconds or until teacher selects a student to make a sentence with that word. Students begin walking again. The activity continues for as long as the teacher would like.

## The War of the Wall

After reading the short story students will partake in a Socratic Seminar focusing on the question: What makes a community?

Working in their Cooperative Learning Group students will complete a Biographical Photo Story about Toni Cade Bambara , it must contain a biography of Bambara, a photo of the artist, one of her works along with an analysis of the piece and three murals at least one must be a local mural along with information about the artist.

Langston Hughes

### *Compare/Contrast Causal relationships*

These questions call attention to common elements or major differences between ideas or arguments. These questions may be used to show causal relationships or to determine whether such relationships exist.

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Write questions in the margins, and then answer the questions in a reading journal or on a separate piece of paper. If you're reading a textbook, try changing all the titles, subtitles, sections and paragraph headings into questions. For example, the section heading "The Gas Laws of Boyle, Charles, and Avogadro" might become "What are the gas laws of Boyle, Charles, and Avogadro?"

### *Language Arts Energizer*

During Reading Rhythms students stand at their desk and no materials are needed. The rules and directions are 1. Students stand by desks., 2. Teacher reads a section from a poem. and 3. Teacher lists type of poetry and corresponding physical activity on the board or on overhead projector. Students perform movement to reveal which type of poem they think was read for at least 30 seconds. The movements are Free verse – fly, Diamante – dance, Haiku – hop, Narrative – nod and jog, Blank verse – bounce, Cinquain – circle walk (walk in a circle) and Limerick – lunge.

### *Thank You Ma'am*

We will view a Langston Hughes video which provides background and cultural information about Langston Hughes. We will review the process and rubric of Socratic Seminar. Conduct a seminar on "Thank You, M'am" and the three manners in which they were presented and differences, similarities and impact of the various manners. Discuss elements of the story and similar experiences to both characters in the story. Students will view the Langston Hughes/Harlem Renaissance video on Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehprXnIP7X0> (32). After reading the story and viewing the video students will create an Argumentative Essay based on their experiences and interactions with *Thank You Ma'am* (33).

### *Jackie Torrence*

### *Evaluation/ Analysis*

These questions are structured like analysis questions but are based on quotations or statements.

These questions provide basic facts and call for sustained answers involving critical thinking.

### *Active Reading Strategy*

Put down your highlighter. Make marginal notes or comments instead. Every time you feel the urge to highlight something, write instead. You can summarize the text, ask questions, give assent, and protest vehemently. You can also write down key words to help you recall where important points are discussed. Above all, strive to enter into a dialogue with the author.

### *Language Arts Energizer*

During the Parts of Speech Go Round activity students will stand by their desk. Each student will need one index card. The rules and directions are 1. Divide index cards into three groups and label each group as follows: Group 1: Different parts of speech e.g., noun, pronoun, verb, adverb etc., Group 2: Corresponding definitions for those parts of speech. e.g., a word that is the name of a person, place, or thing Group 3: Write examples the parts of speech. e.g., boy (noun), her (pronoun), go (verb), hastily (adverb), 2. Randomly give out index cards (may have to have more than one index card in the category of example depending on your class size)., 3. Activity begins and the students move around the room to find the matching cards. e.g., student with noun card finds student with the definition of a noun, and the student with the example of a noun. 4. Students should move around the room different ways which are provided in the Movement Bank. and 5. Once students find the correct matching card they will jog in place until all matching cards are found.

### *Brer Possum's Dilemma*

Students will read *Brer Possum's Dilemma* in groups. After reading the folktale students will visit the Jackie Torrence website, <http://jackietorrence.com/> to learn information about her. Students will listen to Part 1 and Part 2 of Jackie Torrence Ghost Stories on Youtube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTJFaTUhYKU> (34) and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXrFO77rFdc&feature=relmfu> (35).

Students will complete the Looking for Cultural Clues? Webquest, <http://www.mcduffie.k12.ga.us/TSA/Webquests/Folktales/index.htm#Overview> (36).

1. What is your opinion regarding your writing skills?

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2. What area of writing are you the most comfortable with?

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3. What area of writing are you the least comfortable with?

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4. How does your ability to successfully use proper grammar impact your writing?

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5. Have you taken a class that focused primarily on writing? If yes, when and where was this class taken?

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6. Prior to this school term, how much attention has been placed on your style of writing?

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7. What are some of your writing goals?

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8. How much time do you spend writing for pleasure?

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9. What are some areas of concerns do you have regarding writing?

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Created by Lakeirra Deshaun Booth 10/06

The Writing Process  
HANDOUT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer ALL questions in complete sentences**

1. What is the first stage of writing?

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2. What is freewriting?

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3. What is brainstorming?

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4. How do you organize information in writing?

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5. What is drafting?

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6. What are the two reasons for drafting? Why are they important?

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7. How and why is Peer Response used?

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8. What is the revising process? How is it implemented?

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9. What is the proofreading mark for:

Insert letter or words	
capitalize	
Switch the position of letters or words	
Begin a new paragraph	

10. What are the two steps to Publishing and Reflecting? How are the implemented?

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11. What is a Writing Portfolio? How is it used?

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Created by Lakeirra DeShaun Booth 11/07

### Reading List for Students

*The People Could Fly* by Virginia Hamilton

*Under the Back Porch* by Virginia Hamilton

*The World Is Not a Pleasant Place* by Nikki Giovanni

*Hip-Hop Speaks to Children* by Nikki Giovanni

*Malcolm X: By Any Mean Necessary* by Walter Dean Myers

*Encounter with Martin Luther King Jr.* by Maya Angelou

“By Any Means Necessary” by Malcolm X

“I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King Jr.

*The Noble Experiment Jackie Robinson* by Alfred Duckett

*The War on the Wall* by Toni Cade Bambara

*Thank You Ma'am* by Langston Hughes

*Brer Possum's Dilemma* by Jackie Torrence

### **List of Materials for Classroom Use**

Computers/Printers

Internet access for students and teacher

LCD Projector and Screen

Laptop with CDROM

Video Cassette Recorder

Textbook

Hip-Hop Speaks to Children by Nikki Giovanni (Picture Book with CD)

### **Teacher Resources**

Kids Blog

According to the website Kidblog it is built by teachers, for teachers, so students can get the most out of the writing process. Their mission is to empower teachers to embrace the benefits of the coming digital revolution in education. As students become creators - not just consumers - of information, we recognize the crucial role of teachers as discussion moderators and content curators in the classroom. With Kidblog, teachers monitor and control all activity within their classroom blogging community.

<http://kidblog.org/home/>

East Carolina University Activity Promotion Laboratory Middle-School Energizers

According to the East Carolina University Activity Promotion Laboratory website and booklet in January of 2003, the State Board of Education passed the Healthy Active Children Policy (HSP-S-000). This policy provides schools with guidance for local school districts to promote coordinated school health programs, and emphasizes physical education and physical activity components. In April 2005, the State Board of Education revised the policy to mandate that schools provide a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity for all K-8 students daily. It is through the support of NC Health and Wellness

Trust Fund, NC Healthy Schools, Be Active North Carolina, Inc., NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NCAAHPERD), NC Department of Public Instruction and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch who allowed East Carolina University (ECU) to write, pilot, and develop the Energizers for daily use by classroom teachers. ECU has tried to design activities and movements that middle school students will feel comfortable performing. To help develop age-and content-appropriate activities, ECU's team of physical activity specialists collaborated with a group of middle school teachers from the following content areas: math, language arts, science, music, health and physical education, and social studies. After the Middle School Energizers were developed, they were sent to middle school teachers throughout the state for pilot testing. The feedback from middle school teachers was then used to revise the Middle School Energizers to their final form.

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-hhp/exss/upload/MSE%20Language%20Arts.pdf>

Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Art + Culture (37)

Since its founding in 1974, the dream of the first visionaries has elevated to unforeseen levels. Located in the heart of Uptown Charlotte, October 2009 marked the opening of the Afro-American Cultural Center as the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture. The naming of the new facility is in honor of Harvey Bernard Gantt, a well-respected community leader and businessman. He is a trailblazer as the first African-American student admitted to Clemson University and later served as Charlotte's first African-American mayor. The center offers workshops, lectures and numerous other educational programs.

<http://www.ganttcenter.org/web/>

Tavis Smiley Presents America I Am: The African American Imprint (38)

America I AM: The African American Imprint is a four-year touring museum exhibition that celebrates nearly 500 years of African American contributions to this country. America I AM provides an opportunity for people from all walks of life to explore this uniquely American story. With the nation's first African American president, America I AM endeavors to bring together Americans of all backgrounds to achieve a greater understanding of their shared culture and history.

<http://www.americaiam.org/about-us/>

CMS Wiki (39)

According to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District Wiki's department, American Heritage dictionary defines a wiki as a "collaborative website whose content can be edited by anyone who has access to it." The name comes from the Hawaiian word wiki-



wiki which means "quick." Teachers and students should think a wiki as a CMS Pages site that anyone can edit. Wikis are being used in education as collaboration tools, where teachers and students can post questions and answers in real-time. Rather than a static webpage that only a few people can edit, wikis draw on the common knowledge of many people to provide the best information available. Users can edit the site to add information at any time, both to provide more worth to the site as well as correct mistakes.

### Notes

1. International Baccalaureate <http://www.ibo.org/>
2. Council for Exceptional Children  
<http://www.cec.sped.org/am/template.cfm?section=Home>
3. Common Core State Standards Initiative <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/introduction/how-to-read-the-standards/>
4. East Carolina University Activity Promotion Laboratory ELA Energizers  
<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-hhp/exss/upload/MSE%20Language%20Arts.pdf>
5. National Paideia Center Website.  
<http://www.paideia.org/content.php/system/index.htm>
6. Cooperative Learning Kennesaw State University educational website  
<http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelarning.htm>
7. Kidblog <http://kidblog.org/home/>
8. Lakeirra DeShaun Booth CMS Wiki Spaces Blog  
<http://lakeirradeshaunbooth.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/CLASS+BLOGS>
9. Lakeirra DeShaun Booth CMS Wiki Spaces All Classes Blog  
<http://kidblog.org/MissBoothsClass/>
10. Lakeirra DeShaun Booth CMS Wiki Spaces First Block Blog  
<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSFIRSTBLOCK/>
11. Lakeirra DeShaun Booth CMS Wiki Spaces Second Block Blog  
<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSSCONDBLOCK/>

12. Lakeirra DeShaun Booth CMS Wiki Spaces Third Block Blog  
<http://kidblog.org/MISSLAKEIRRADESHAUNBOOTHSTHIRDBLOCK/>
13. Virginia Hamilton <http://www.virginiahamilton.com/>
14. Meet Virginia Hamilton Youtube Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyP5ZOMEn6c>
15. The People Could Fly by Virginia Hamilton Picture Book
16. Under the Back Porch by Virginia Hamilton Holt McDougal Literature Book
17. The People Could Fly Part 1 Youtube Video  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-pfgP19l\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-pfgP19l_s)
18. The People Could Fly Part 2 Youtube Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXyTkxDoY3Y&feature=relmfu>
19. Nikki Giovanni Interactive Website <http://nikki-giovanni.com/>
20. Nikki Giovanni Biography Reading Rockets' Youtube Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Efhxc4iM4FY>
21. Nikki Giovanni Interview Youtube Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPndtZnyRfo>
22. Hip-Hop Speaks to Children: A Celebration of Poetry with a Beat (Picture Book with Audio CD) by Nikki Giovanni
23. Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary Biography by Walter Dean Myers
24. Walter Dean Myers Interactive Website <http://www.walterdeanmyers.net/>
25. Reading Rockets Walter Dean Myers video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soueMVStVzs>
26. Malcolm X: Make it Plain Biography PBS Youtube Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zvGRmX2gcs>

27. Malcolm X's By Any Means Necessary speech Youtube video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zvGRmX2gcs>
28. Martin Luther King Jr. Biography Channel's Mini-Bio  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ank52Zi\\_S0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ank52Zi_S0)
29. New York Times Obituary Section  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/08/obituaries/alfred-a-duckett-67-dead-an-author-and-businessman.html>
30. Biography Channel's Jackie Robinson's Mini-Bio  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILIA20AqA5I>
31. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Revised Bloom's Taxonomy  
<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/acre/standards/>
32. Langston Hughes/Harlem Renaissance video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehprXnIP7X0>
33. Thank You Ma'am by Langston Hughes and VHS by Phoenix Films
34. Jackie Torrence Ghost Stories Part 1  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTJFaTUhYKU>
35. Jackie Torrence Ghost Stories Part 2  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXrFO77rFdc&feature=relmfu>
36. Looking for Cultural Clues? Webquest Developed by (Jennifer Newton and Beth Jackson)  
<http://www.mcduffie.k12.ga.us/TSA/Webquests/Folktales%20Updated/>
37. Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Art + Culture  
<http://www.ganttcenter.org/web/>
38. Tavis Smiley Presents America I Am: The African American Imprint  
<http://www.americaiam.org/>
39. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Wikispaces  
<http://www.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/>

## Resources

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