

## *The Glory Field: Reading the Life of Walter Dean Myers*

by Delee Marciano

### **Narrative**

The novel *The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers is the center of this literary analysis unit. This novel lends itself to being used both in the Social Studies and the Language Arts classroom. As I look across my classroom, the challenge that I face this year as well as in years past becomes evident once again. I need to find literature that speaks and inspires students who are tired and bored with mundane selections read in yesteryears. I need to find activities that go beyond the typical Freytag's Pyramid and KWL charts. I need to light a fire of passion for literature in 12 year olds. Talk about a challenge. Yet every morning when I wake up and every afternoon when I sit in front of a lesson plan book, this is the beast I find myself trying to tackle. This year is no exception. I hear the groans of complaint as I ask my students to pull out a sheet of paper. I know those groans. I have heard them for years. Why should this year be any different? A new teacher does necessarily mean fun and excitement in the Language Arts classroom. Little do they know that they are about to embark on an adventure that asks them to defy their typical approach to literature, confront literature from a new perspective, and threaten to leave them in love with works of literature, both short stories, poems, and full length novels.

In addition to the normal middle school teacher challenge of engaging students, I find myself searching to make those connections between two content areas as well. I want for my students to see how intertwined these humanities contents are and possibly even make those connections for themselves. These presents another set of challenges. Not only do I have to show the students that they a selection of literature can alter their lives forever, but it can also bring history alive like the students have never seen before. My students will be seeing me twice a day this school year for both Language Arts and Social Studies. This is quite different from the typical middle school model. Further mitigating the challenges that we, my students and I, will face this academic year.

### **Objective**

While teaching this book, I will use the following questions to guide my unit and instruction in the Language Arts classroom: What does it mean to be a "family?" Do you have to be related by blood to be a family? How does your family influence your life both now and even in the future? What influences your life besides your family? Your neighborhood? Your school? Your decisions about the future? What is home? In the Social Studies classroom, we will explore how decisions made by a few can affect the outcome of life for many. We will look at how the African slave trade translated across worlds to affect people on three different continents. We will look at how religion, customs, and culture evolve and change based on where you are and whom you are surrounded by. We will translate those ideas back into the Language Arts classroom by identifying how those changes in culture influence family and traditions. Finally, I will use the influences and experiences of Walter Dean Myers to explore his

works both fiction and nonfiction to lead to the discovery of how his personal life influenced his works of literature. The ultimate goal is to facilitate the thinking of students to come to the conclusion on their own of how Myers was influenced by events in his life and the world around him and how these influences translated into his writing through the use of his other works and his biographical information found in both his autobiography and works by other writers about Myers.

My long term goals for this unit is to enhance communication skills in both the written and verbal forms, refine critical thinking skills, and offer rigorous, yet entertaining, ways to explore new literature and history. The strategies found within this unit involve a large amount of written and verbal communication in private, small group, and whole class settings. I will use multiple instructional tools and strategies which will be presented in a variety of formats. The unit will also contain a technology piece as part of their 21st Century Skills that are vital to their success in the future. Communication is vastly important for middle school students who are college bound, those that seek a leadership role, and to be an active participant in their community and professions.

Another long term goal is to teach writing through the use of literature. Students will be asked to respond to literature through creative means. The purpose of this is two-fold. First, students must be able to, again, effectively communicate via the written word. Second, they must be able to understand the literature to appropriately respond. This will be used to monitor both writing aptitude and reading comprehension. Both of these skills are important for students to be successful.

Finally, my ultimate goal is to inspire. I want my students to fall in love with stories and the art of literature. The best way to accomplish this goal is to show students that literature is important, easy to connect with and relate to, and enjoyable. Often, literature is lost on our students because they are inundated with strategies and questions and worksheets. They lose the love of literature through the process of work with the literature. Most students seem to have a love of reading until they realize all of the work that they are required to do every time they read. In our data driven world, the focus for teachers, unfortunately, becomes the skills required to pass a test and not the love of the literature that inspired them to be teachers in the first place. In this unit, my goal is to teach students how to use those skills to fall in love with the literature and to respond to the literature in such a way that they are not bored, but rather inspired by the work.

Within these objectives, I must also consider the Common Core Standards for English/Language Arts and for Social Studies. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools recently adopted the Common Core Standards as a basis for yearly objectives. The idea is that all students will “master” these objectives making them well-rounded thinkers and innovators with 21st Century Skills. This unit encompasses the following objectives:

**Common Core:**

RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

- We will also provide an object summary of the text itself.

- We will determine the theme of the text and analyze how the theme develops in and among the chapters of the novel.

RL.7.6: Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

- We will discuss how Walter Dean Myers develops the characters of with discussion that revolve around how the characters change throughout the course of the novel. Also, we will alter the point of view from which a selection of the story is told. We will use this to show how an alternative point of view can show character development.

W.7.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

- We will explore the idea of slave trade and how it influences life and culture. We will make claims regarding how the slave trade was justified, why other people might disagree, and organize those arguments and counterarguments into a clear and cohesive writing.

W.7.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- Students will write narratives about imagined experiences and events in relation to the novel itself. How would you react if you were in the character's place? What would you do? How would you feel?

SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Students will work in whole group settings (Socratic Seminar), groups (Reader's Theater, Cooperative Learning Groups, Journaling/"Facebooking") and one-on-one (RAFT, alternate endings, blogging).

## **Background**

Randolph Middle School stands out among local middle schools. Our school has worked hard, and our students even harder, to shine in our large urban school district. We are an Honor School of Excellence. There are over 1200 students representing 32 nationalities, among the most diverse in the city, enrolled in my school which encompasses three programs: International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB), Exceptional Children Program, and Horizons. According to the IB website, the programme is a "non-profit educational foundation that is focused on the well rounded, internationally minded student." A student attending a school with this programme benefits by actively participating in the components which heighten critical thinking, gain an understanding of issues that impact people both domestically and abroad, and develop a true concept of the role of the individual in the international community. The Exceptional Children's Program focuses on the personal development of students with physical and/or mental disabilities that inhibit them from participating in a regular education program. These students, however, still meet IB requirements tailored to their specific needs within the Exceptional Children's Program and the requirements listed in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Horizons students are among some of the most talented in the district and arguably

the nation. It is a talent development and advanced studies program that offers a challenging and motivating environment for highly gifted students. These students must have an IQ of at least 145 and be working two to three years above grade level among other program specific qualifications. They, also, still meet IB requirements within their specialized program. Basic demographic information of the school is as follows: 49% female/51% male, 48% free or reduced lunch, 71% minority population, and 87% of students are at or above grade level in mathematics and reading. My class specifically is a 7th Grade Honors Language Arts and a mixed ability 7th Grade Humanities class. These students are performing at or above grade level on North Carolina End-of-Grade standardized tests for English/Language Arts. I do however have several students on Personalized Education Plans for a variety of reasons including behavior issues and academic issues. Two students are on Individualized Education Plans for physical and mental health issues. Finally, I have 4 students among the four classes that are considered English Language Learners. All of these students have specific needs that must be met while at the same time I am trying to challenge my students that scored significantly above grade level.

In addition to these school wide statistics, my instructional day is quite unique as well. I teach two content areas. I teach Language Arts and Humanities (Social Studies) while my team mate teaches Math and Science. We teach 58 students on a self contained two man team. This means that I see the same students in both Language Arts and Social Studies. With that in mind, I have worked to make this unit as interdisciplinary as possible to incorporate in both the Language Arts and Humanities classrooms. According to research conducted by the Center for Prevention Research and Development at the University of Illinois, within the "teamed" middle school, students and teachers greatly benefit for a variety of reasons. (Flowers, et al) The studies show that in addition to improving the work climate for teachers, it also increases parental contact, job satisfaction, and student growth. The students and teachers find themselves in environments that are conducive to learning and are welcoming and intimate. As a result of our two man team, our students are placed in their mathematics class by the previous year's End of Grade testing score. They are leveled into one Honors Math 7 class and one Math 7 class. Due to this leveling, I find myself with students who are scoring significantly above grade level in one Language Arts class, and at the low end of the average spectrum in the second Language Arts class. Last, when they come to Social Studies, they are mixed ability and may be from either Languages Arts/Math classes. This results in a need to differentiate the Social Studies class greatly; whereas in the Language Arts class, they are very close in score and ability.

Last, as you read through this unit, it is important to note several things. First, my classes are on blocked scheduling and I have my students for 90 minutes every day in Language Arts and 90 minutes every other day in Social Studies. The lessons are written based on that time allotted. You may need to adjust the lessons based on the time you have available. Also, this unit is written so that you can left out pieces or use the whole thing. Most of the activities can stand alone. I adjust the activities based on the level of the class. Some of these activities I would do with my Honors class as they are higher order thinking. However, there are other activities that would not be challenging enough for my Honors leveled class and thus would only be used in my Standard leveled class.

## **Rationale**

This novel is a catalyst for the critical thinking skills that are vital to middle school education. *The Glory Field* dramatizes many situations and themes that are applicable to the everyday life of a preteen such as community, family, justice, and prejudices. The novel spurs discussion and launches students into a conversation concerning a range of valued ideologies. A unit of study constructed around this novel will stimulate the learner to examine a text and respond in an appropriate manner. It will force the student to pay attention to topics that they can relate to and see that subject matter come alive in the text as well as in their lives.

This novel is also available in our canon for 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools adopted a canon of novels available for teachers at each grade level. These novels can only be read by teachers working with that grade level allowing them to ensure that the novels they teach will not have been taught in previous years. Teachers are allowed to teach outside the canon as long as they do not venture into the canons at other grade levels. As a result of this new canon adoption, teachers have a fantastic classroom set of hardback editions of the novels in their canon.

Often times, teachers find themselves either teaching the genre they like most or realistic fiction as it is usually enjoyed by most students. The idea behind teaching *The Glory Field* is that the students will be exposed to historical fiction. This gives them exposure to a variety of genres beyond realistic fiction. I have included within this unit short stories that are realistic fiction, nonfiction, and poetry all relating to the ideas being discussed of family, community, justice, and prejudice.

Last, this novel is written by Walter Dean Myers arguably one of the most influential Young Adult writers of our time. He has written a variety of works that appeal to a variety of students. He makes connections between the generations in the use of this novel. He shows the relationships between the old and the young, between ancestors and their predecessors, between the lives of those in the past and our lives today. He uses history to tell his story. His story transcends the stories of so many people. He shows relationships among people groups and how they have influenced one another throughout history. He rewrites history to include the African American story and to fill in the gaps that the history books have forgotten. Myers wants to show that American history is Black history through this selection.

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

### Instructional Strategies

#### *Reader's Theater*

The use of Reader's Theater elicits a variety of responses from students. However, the approach can change a child's perception of Reader's Theater. It can offer a different context in which students are exposed to a text. It allows for a more enhanced comprehension of the text, creates a strong interest in the text, and shows students how to interact with a text that is not

limited to just completed comprehension check questions (though they are valuable). This strategy provides reading practice over and over again to build understanding and fluency. It also lets them out of their seats for awhile, a huge benefit for middle schoolers. This strategy is particularly beneficial to kinesthetic learners. It allows a student to show a more creative side while still demonstrating knowledge of the literature at hand. This is an activity in which students, while reading directly from scripts, are able to tell a portion of the story in an entertaining way that needs little to no resources other than the novel itself.

### *Role-Play Scenarios*

An additional strategy being used, similar to Reader's Theater, is known as "Role-Play" Scenarios. Students, especially at the middle school level, are concrete thinkers. I think there is a benefit to allowing students to take the ideas and situations found within the novels and projecting themselves into the story. The idea is not that the reader becomes a character, but rather they are themselves faced with the same challenges and choices as that character. The strategy is great for character development in addition to the literacy aspect. When they have a chance to practice making decisions in the face of adversity, they understand the conflicts within the story as well conflicts in real life. Role Play has the ability to develop and enhance content skills as well as skills need to be successful in the future. Studies have shown that those involved in role play are involved in the construction of their learning. This enhances critical thinking skills.

### *Character Development Writing and Perspectives*

We write best when we write from the first person point of view. As a result, I have a tendency to allow my students to create many assignments written from the first person. I allow them to become characters and write, write, write. It is amazing how the students' writing develops and how much better it seems to be when I give them this opportunity. In this particular, unit students will write from the first person point of view. The twist is that they have to become a character other than the one telling the story. If the story is told already being told in First Person, they will have to choose another character. If the story is being told in Third Person, then the student may become the main character to reveal the thoughts as well as the actions of the character. This allows students to become a part of the story rather than a spectator looking in on the characters.

### *Socratic Seminar/Paideia Seminar*

Socratic Seminars will be implemented throughout the course of the unit to gain an insight of the students' perspective on the information being presented within the unit. The lesson is conducted using a strategy known as Paideia Seminar, which is a great tool for fostering students' participation in the whole class interaction. According to the National Paideia Center's website, Paideia increases students' factual recall, develops students' literacy skills, and strengthen 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. The idea behind the Socratic Seminar is to engage students in academic conversations with the teacher as the facilitator and not a participant. If you are anything like me, you will find it very difficult not to contribute. However, it is important to remain unbiased and not contributing. The seminar is best if you do not guide the conversation but rather allow the students to guide themselves to explore the topics at hand.

An alternative to the Socratic Seminar is called the Fishbowl Technique. It has been my experience that this technique is more effective to introduce the scholarly conversations and then I move to the whole-class Socratic Seminar after they have demonstrated mastery on the Fishbowl Technique on several occasions. I deem mastery as being able to effectively communicate and listen to others without getting hostile or rude.

### *Cooperative Learning Groups*

Cooperative Learning Groups vary from Paideia/Socratic Seminar in that they allow students to interact on a smaller scale. Many of the lessons found within this unit will depend on Cooperative Learning Groups. These groups will be selected by the teacher or by the students depending on the activity, focus, and rigor. The groups are small so the students feel more comfortable, but it still allows me as the teacher to challenge students. Often, I will divide the groups, so that I can give specific instructions based on capability. High achievers and those who are deemed “Talent Development” will receive more rigorous activities while those who are struggling will receive activities tailored to their needs. Other times, I will divide them into small teams, each with students on varying achievement levels. The groups are small enough so that each student feels that they can contribute to the task and work together while no one is being “left behind.” 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 must work through conflicts and problems that arise until all members understand the concepts and can successfully complete the assignment. This gives students a sense of ownership and achievement in their work within the group.

### *RAFT Forms*

RAFT is a “system to help students understand their roles as writers (R), the audience they will address (A), the varied formats of writing (F), and the expected topic (T).” Almost all RAFT papers are written from a perspective other than the writer’s own point of view. It also allows the students to play with the audience to whom they will write. This writing assignment deviates greatly from the standard “constructed” essay. The student is given creative license within the context of their own writing. It helps students structure their writing assignment while at the same giving them the chance to be creative. It teaches them to write to a specific audience and helps them to focus on that audience. As a teacher, I can choose to give my students one of the aspects, all of the aspects, or none of the aspects. It is a liberty that varies depending on the assignment at hand.

### *Prequel, Sequel, and Alternate Endings*

This strategy is fun for the kids and wildly entertaining to grade. This is an advantage for everyone involved. The students create prequels, sequels, or alternate endings to the story being read. This activity will help the child to analyze the literature, pay attention to details all while expressing their own creative style. Depending on the level of the student, you can also hold them accountable for continuing within the same writing style as the author. Using this as a post reading activity can help reinforce comprehension as well as demonstrate a student's knowledge of characters, sequence of events, and dictate their own ideas. (readingcoachonline.com)

### *"Facebooking" or Blogging*

This is a great activity for children to write back and forth and also implements the much needed student centered technology component. In this strategy, students create journals between characters. A forum or discussion board is created on the teacher's webpage, or other education website such as a [www.wikipages.com](http://www.wikipages.com) or [www.edmoto.com](http://www.edmoto.com), for the students to use in small groups. Within those small groups, each child decides which character they would like to be with no child acting as the same character. The students, in the computer lab or at home as an extended homework assignment, write back and forth to each other in journal style, relaying: the events of the day (or what happened in that day's reading), their role within the context of the events, the conflict, their thoughts, actions, and words, and other character's response to them.

The students then are allowed to interact with each other in an online community, as well as take the role of a character.

The strategy of "Facebooking" focuses on the development of characters which is strongly seen in the development of characters in the novel such as Ponyboy Curtis and Johnny Cade. It is a way for the students to explore the characters more in-depth and think about how that character changes over the course of the novel. Creating a fake "Facebook" page would allow the students to accomplish this goal. This does require internet connection which may pose as a problem for some students as it often is not accessible on network computers. If Facebook is blocked by your school network, you could try [www.myfakewall.com](http://www.myfakewall.com). Each student creates an information page about a character. This gives them the opportunity to think about characterization within a novel or story. The students have to consider what a character looks like, their interests and activities, quotes, and interactions with other characters. The students can then "add" each other as characters, and respond to each other via "Facebook." This strategy is relevant to the students as Facebook often monopolizes their spare time. (ilearntechnology.com/?p=3719)

In my class students are required to interact with the text, with me, with each other, and with the unit topic using our class blog site. Students must log-in to [www.kidblog.org](http://www.kidblog.org) and answer the unit question when it is posed. This allows them to use those 21st Century Skills but in an educational way. The main area of concern in blogging is gaining permission from parents.

### *Related Readings*



Whenever I reach a unit based on a selection of literature, I always look for short selections of literature from a variety of genres to support the text that I am working with. I may choose selections written by the same writer or selections that explore the same themes. With this unit, I have chosen to explore the theme of family and have selected pieces from a variety of genres that delve into the idea of family and what it looks like. I will also look at how family influences culture and vice versa. I have also taken selections from other Walter Dean Myers works to implement in the Social Studies classroom to invite my students to look at other historical fiction selections by Myers to learn about events that actually took place in history.

### *Author's Study*

This is a widely used strategy in education. Author's Study is a powerful teaching tool. The idea behind it is effective and simplistic. The students will read biographical selections about Walter Dean Myers and then work to find a relationship between his life and the stories he tells. It helps students critically evaluate a writer's reoccurring themes, writing style, and use of characters. It also helps students make personal connections between their own lives and the life of a writer. This idea will hopefully inspire our children to write when they see that writers live lives similar to their own.

### *WebQuest*

According to [webquest.org](http://webquest.org), "a WebQuest is an inquiry-oriented lesson format in which most or all of the information that learners work with comes from the web." This instructional tool was designed by Bernie Dodge of San Diego State University. WebQuests are a way to make good use of the internet while engaging students and using those 21st Century skills required for success. The basic concept is that students will be given a series of "tasks" to complete using a set of websites. Students will use the WebQuest be introduced to Walter Dean Myers and his works.

### *Collaborative Listening-Viewing Guide*

The Collaborative Listening-Viewing Guide is a lesson framework to assist students in learning from information that they view or hear. It gives the student the opportunity to demonstrate background knowledge on a topic or idea. It also assists in organizing content that has been learned from what is viewed or heard. Students will use this activity to organize thoughts and background knowledge on Walter Dean Myers.

### **Classroom Activities**

These activities are based on a 90 minute blocked schedule for 8 weeks. Also, the activities listed herein are not the only activities going on in class. Like most Language Arts teachers, there will be vocabulary review, grammar, writing, and other objectives to meet. Lastly, note that these activities don't have to be taught in consecutive days. You can teach them consecutively or divide them up as they fit into your calendar.

## Pre-Reading Activities

### *Days 1-3: Introduction of the writer*

This day will consist of both the Collaborative Listening-Viewing Guide (CLVG) and the WebQuest. First, give students a copy of the CLVG (Appendix A). Elicit a discussion on what students know about Walter Dean Myers and any of his works. Write down their ideas on the board and ask them to record in the "What We Know" section. Then have students record notes as they listen in the section "My Notes". Students will listen to NPR's interview with Walter Dean Myers found here: <http://www.npr.org/2012/01/10/144944598/to-do-well-in-life-you-have-to-read-well>.

Second, students will need to read three of Myers picture books. *Harlem* which is an illustrated selection of poetry, *Malcolm X* which is a biographical picture book, and *Patrol* which is a fictional account of a soldier's life in Vietnam. Although these books are picture books, the content held within is not necessarily of small children. In my attempt to inspire a love of reading, I am choosing not to require an activity with these stories. I want the students to read and enjoy them. It will be evident later on as to whether they finished the reading or not. I chose one of the stories, *Harlem*, to read aloud and do a think aloud with my students.

On that same day in Social Studies, I am reading *Patrol* to my students and briefly talking about Vietnam and the many faceted argument for and against the war. This does not need to be an entire lesson. It should only take about 20 minutes or so. It can be used as an activity at the beginning or end of class. However, the 7th Grade Common Core Standards for Social Studies does include the Vietnam War. In Social Studies, I will coincide my conversations of the Vietnam War with teaching this novel.

Day 2: Divide students up into cooperative learning groups. For this activity, I will divide my students into 10 heterogeneous groups. Each group will be given one of the stories from *145th Street Stories* about people in the Harlem neighborhood. The students will be given the story and asked to read it in their groups. Then have them compare the character in the story to themselves and their favorite character from another novel.

For homework, assign the students to read the chapter entitled "Harlem" from Walter Dean Myers' autobiography *Bad Boy* and fill in their CLVG as appropriate.

On this day in Social Studies, read a selection from *Fallen Angel* and ask how the excerpt relates to the picture book *Patrol*.

Day 3: Finally, students will go to the computer lab to complete their WebQuest on Walter Dean Myers. As students complete their WebQuest "Task," have them to continue writing what they have learned about Myers on their CLVG. In this WebQuest, found here: <http://www.uvm.edu/~litblock/webquest/236Spring2003/Myers/tasks.htm>, students will explore Harlem, Myers life growing up, his description of himself in *Bad Boy*, and the picture books read on the previous day. Have students return to their heterogeneous groups to elaborate on their individual notes about Walter Dean Myers. Here they can recall details, extend ideas as a

group, and record new information in the "Our Group's Notes" section. Finally, come back together as a whole group. Synthesize the information as a collective group. Ask students to contribute what they learned from the readings, the WebQuest, and their group members. Record the information on chart paper and leave up in the room throughout the unit as a source of reference. Have students record the information in the "We Learned" section of their CLVG. Last, extend the activities into pairs. Have students work in pairs to develop a chart or map of the key concepts and compose a paragraph synthesizing the most important events of Myers' life and career as a writer.

In Social Studies, ask how Myers' life, pointing particularly to the fact that he had to drop out of school and join the army, may relate to the selection we read in *Fallen Angel* and in *Patrol*. Discuss the idea of young boys having to serve in the army and how that might affect them when they return home. Read the article entitled "Veterans make up 1 in 4 Homeless" by Matt Rourke ([http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-11-07-homeless-veterans\\_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-11-07-homeless-veterans_N.htm)). Discuss how the Vietnam War affected America and how it still influences society today.

#### *Day 4: Introducing Themes*

On this day, the teacher should begin to introduce the themes of the novel. Theme seems to be a very difficult idea for my students to comprehend. We spend a great deal of time exploring the concept of theme. When I work with a large selection of literature, I often introduce the theme, without calling it so, and revisit the idea over and over. Finally, I focus the discussion and guide thinking about the idea(s) found within the selection of literature. I never come out and tell my students but rather I facilitate their thinking for them to draw the conclusion on their own. One way that I have found to be particularly effective is called the Fishbowl Technique. In this technique, four students will sit in the center of a circle. All other students will be seated in the outside circle. The four in center will be given a question in which they will discuss. Once a student has stated their opinion and no longer wishes to participate in the conversation, they stand up and ask another person on the outside to join the fishbowl. As the facilitator, you are not allowed to speak your opinion, but rather pose questions and ensure students are actively engaged. You must set ground rules before beginning. I always go over the ground rules with my students. They are as follows:

1. No one may interrupt the speaker.
2. No one may speak a second time until everyone in the fishbowl has spoken.
3. You must speak before exiting the fishbowl.
4. If you are an "outsider," you may not speak until you are invited into the fishbowl.
5. You should take notes about what is being said in order to express your opinion once inside the fishbowl.
6. Absolutely no name calling or rude remarks.
7. Address the question posed. If you notice your group getting off subject, guide the conversation back to the original question.

This novel has three overarching themes: family, hope, and freedom. I want my students to explore their opinions of these themes now and after they have finished reading to see if their ideas about family, hope, and freedom change or remain the same. The following is a list of questions that I pose as guidance to themes in the novel.

1. What is oral tradition and why is important?
2. What does it mean to be a family?
3. Do you have to be related to be a family? Defend.
4. How does your family influence your life both now and in the future?
5. What influences your life besides your family? Which is more powerful? Why?
6. What is home?
7. What is hope?
8. What does it mean to be free?
9. Should everyone have the right to be free?
10. What personal characteristics might have helped enslaved African Americans find the courage to survive?

### *Day 5 - Introduction of the Novel*

Introduce the genre by presenting pros and cons of historical fiction and list some of the reasons why a writer might choose to write historical fiction rather than other types of fictional writing. Why is it important? Is it relevant? Discuss other stories read in class that are considered historical fiction and why these stories are important. For my class, we will have read several historical fiction selections including *The Drummer Boy of Shiloh* by Ray Bradbury. This selection was read and will be referenced in this unit as the setting is the American Civil War.

Have students read *Part 1: July 1753*.

Students will then work in Literature Circle Groups that were previously determined when they completed their other pre-reading work. They will revisit the portion of the novel where the narrator presents facts about America and Africa during this time. Ask the students to discuss in their groups the politics, the slave trade, occupations, and their thoughts on Africans at the time. Then discuss how the writer makes the information believable and the tone that Myers uses for this section. Finally, in their groups, have students write about the fear that they see in the novel. What words do Myers' use to convey the idea that Muhammad is afraid? What is he afraid of? How does he hold on to hope even though he feels this fear of losing his family forever? What does this tell us about his character? How might that idea translate into the life of Walter Dean Myers and his service in the army?

### Character Development Writing and Personal Narrative

Read aloud the portion of the novel when Muhammad finally realizes his fate and that he is forever separated from his family. Write an inner-monologue that Muhammad would have as he begins to realize these facts. Use evidence from the text to substantiate their ideas. Complete for homework.

In Social Studies that day, have students discuss how historical fiction might help them learn about historical events and if they think historical fiction should be used in the Social Studies classroom. Secondly, discuss the idea of the Triangular Trade across the Atlantic. Give the students a map of the world with the Transatlantic Slave Trade marked from Great Britain, to Sierra Leone, to the Caribbean and the information cards found on this website: [http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/Activities/03\\_TriangularTrade.pdf](http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/Activities/03_TriangularTrade.pdf). Complete

Task A with discussion questions with students. In our pacing for Social Studies, my students will have already discussed the Slave Trade. I make this a quick review of what we have already learned, and discuss with my students the connections between literature and what we learn in Social Studies.

### *Day 6 - Exploring the Concept of Family*

Gallery Walk: On the walls, have pictures of a variety of family including pictures that are in the novel itself, pictures of Myers with his family, and pictures of you and your family. Ask students what the people in those pictures value and how they know. Then ask students to pick their favorite and explain why. Discuss as a class. Ask students what other types of photos they would like to see in the novel and why they think that way.

### *Day 7 - Characterization*

Have students create a "Facebook" page as Muhammad. What kind of pictures would they include in their page? Status updates? "Likes"? Use [www.myfakewall.com](http://www.myfakewall.com) to allow students to create this page. In order to receive full credit, they must use actual words or thoughts of the character as status updates, pictures, and things that the character may like or dislike.

Begin reading *Part II: March 1864*.

Discuss the idea of "freedom" and the "freedom dreams" as based on the dialogue of Saran. Read aloud the part where Saran talks about Joshua and his "freedom dream." Have students come up with a definition of "freedom." Then collaborate as class on coming up with one working definition to be displayed in the classroom throughout the course of the unit. Discuss how the idea of freedom and a freedom dream relate to the novel.

Create a "Facebook" page for Lizzy using [www.myfakewall.com](http://www.myfakewall.com), then have students go and write advice that they would give Lizzy regarding her predicament about leaving the plantation.

### *Day 8 - Reader's Theater*

Give students a chance to work in their groups assigning each a section of the story. Then have them perform their section of the story for the class.

Begin reading *Part III: April 1900*.

### *Day 9 - Active Reading*

Finish reading *Part III: April 1900*. Begin the Active Reading Graphic Organizer (Appendix B). Discuss how hard it has been for Richard to care for his family the way he wants. What does Richard desire and what is he willing to sacrifice? What does this tell us about Richard and his love for his family? Divide the class into sections. Have one group argue the benefits that would come to Elijah if he gets the needed money to keep the Glory Field. Have the other group argue the sacrifices Elijah would have to make.

### Cooperative Learning Groups

In the first section of the novel, several of the characters are "trapped." Even though this plays out differently for each of the characters, many of them are physically or economically trapped. In their groups, have them find examples of different kinds of shackles that imprison different characters in both the literal and figurative sense and discuss the symbolism of the shackles in the story. Next, have the group read aloud the section where Elijah and his cousin refuse to lend their boat to white men. What does this decision symbolize? What about the Glory Field and its symbolism and the fact that Elijah leaves the Glory Field? Finally, discuss why they think Myers chose to use symbolism in this work.

### Related Readings

Read Rita Dove's "Lay Freedom Among Us" and Robert Hayden's "Runagate Runagate."

Respond to the following questions:

1. How is the idea of escaping enslavement portrayed in "Runagate Runagate?"
2. Whom do you think is the speaker of "Lay Freedom Among Us"? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Which character in *The Glory Field* do you think would best relate to each of these poems? Why do you think that way?
4. What do you imagine the statue in Rita Dove's poem looks like? Sketch a picture of it and add quotes that inspired your drawing.

### Facebook

Have the student "Facebook" as Lizzy talking to Elijah. Tell students they must demonstrate a knowledge of the relationship between the two characters. How does Lizzy feel about Elijah leaving the Glory Field?

### *Day 10: Part IV - May 1930*

Begin reading Part IV. Have students create a timeline of the important events thus far in the novel.

In Social Studies, discuss The Great Migration and why African Americans left the South and the promises the North held for them. Read a selection from *The Warmth of Other Suns* that explains the migration and why it is important to American history. Discuss the idea of the Jim Crow South and why fleeing seemed to be the only option for a lot of blacks. As you read about Luvenia and Tommy, note some of the forces that pull them in opposing directions when Luvenia wants to leave Chicago. How does their struggle translate to the struggle of many African Americans of the time?

### *Day 11*

Continue reading Part IV. Have students investigate "rent parties" and discuss why Luvenia wants to have one. How were rent parties important to society at the time Luvenia is in Chicago?

### Role Playing

Have students discuss what motivates Florenz to lie about Luvenia and how it exemplifies discrimination. Then have students find examples of discrimination present in the story. For example: restrictions against blacks, the riots, the white-only institutions, rumor, lack of opportunity, etc. Have students role play how each of these examples play out in the story of Luvenia or have students find specific examples of discrimination against a character in the novel and role play how this affected their lives.

### *Day 12 - Part V*

Begin reading Part V: January 1964.

#### Alternative View Points

Have students rewrite the section about Skeeter being beaten by the KKK. Write it from the perspective of a Klan member. What was the Klan upset about? How they express their anger? Why do they feel they are justified in their anger?

#### Discovering Themes

Have students explore the relationship between Skeeter, Jennie, and Tommy. How do they represent "family"?

Read the story entitled "The Amigo Brothers" by Piri Thomas. Discuss the idea of what family really is and if it is limited to blood relation.

Social Studies Connection: Discuss the rise of the KKK in the US particularly in the South. Also, discuss the Civil Rights Movement and its affect on the US.

### *Day 13*

In "January 1964", Myers chooses to include what seem to be a newspaper account of Sheriff Moser's press conference and the treatment of Tommy. Imagine that you are a citizen of Johnson City who has read this account. Write a letter to the editor on your thoughts of this account. How do you feel?

#### Symbolism

Remind the students of the use of symbolism in this novel. Have students come up with symbols that represent the personality of each of the characters in this novel.

#### Cooperative Group Activity

In their novel groups, assign each group an aspect of daily life: hygiene, school, work, social life, and religion. Have each of the groups create a collage of how that area of life looks in our life today and how it is presented in this section of the book.

Read "1954" from Myers' autobiography *Bad Boy* in relation to black and white tensions and *Brown v. Board of Education*.

### *Day 14 - Part VI: August 1994 and Epilogue*

Read Myers' chapter entitled "Harlem" in *Bad Boy*. Discuss how Harlem in *Bad Boy* and Harlem in *The Glory Field* are similar and different. Describe the culture that Malcolm grows up in and how this compares to the culture of Myers own childhood. Do you think Malcolm's Harlem is based on the life of Myers? Why or why not?

Next, read "An American Childhood" by Annie Dillard. Discuss how life as a child is different for whites and for blacks.

Read Part VI.

### *Day 15 - Childhood*

Discuss what message the students think Myers is trying to send with the two cultures represented in this chapter. How does this add to the history of the book? Compare and contrast the two.

Read Aloud

Read Aloud the section where Malcolm receives the shackles. Do you feel this is a fitting place for them in the end? Where did you picture the shackles at the end? Why do you think they were sent to Malcolm?

Journey of the Shackles

The shackles of Muhammed appear throughout the entire novel. Create a map that traces where the shackle go and how they influence the plot. Also, Muhammed is a minor character in this novel, whose presence is huge. Why is this so? How does he alter the plot? Use this opportunity to discuss how characters, even minor characters can influence and change the outcome of the story with their words and actions. Discuss other symbols in the novel. Have students complete the symbolism collage (Appendix E).

Complete the timeline of the novel. Be sure to include historical events as well as events in the Lewis Family.

### *Day 16 - The Grand Finale*

Alternative Viewpoints: Choose your favorite character in this book along with your favorite scene. Rewrite the scene from that character's point of view using the RAFT form to complete your assignment (Appendix C).

1. R- Determined by student
2. A- Determined by student
3. F- Determined by student
4. T- Symbolism in the novel

Final Essay: The characters in this book all have their own motivations in life. Select four major character and explain what their motivation is throughout the course of the novel and how this motivation affects their goals.



Revisit your previous Socratic Seminar. This time pose the questions and have students respond with support from the novel. I would give them the questions that will be asked to ensure they have time to develop an answer with support from the novel. Use the Socratic Seminar Evaluation for assessment (Appendix D). The questions are as follows:

1. What is oral tradition and why is important?
2. What does it mean to be a family?
3. Do you have to be related to be a family? Defend.
4. How does your family influence your life both now and in the future?
5. What influences your life besides your family? Which is more powerful? Why?
6. What is home?
7. What is hope?
8. What does it mean to be free?
9. Should everyone have the right to be free?
10. What personal characteristics might have helped enslaved African Americans find the courage to survive?

Appendix A

# Collaborative Listening and Viewing Guide

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Partner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**My Notes**

**My Partner's Notes**

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**We learned that:**

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Appendix B

Active Reading Graphic Organizer

<p>Predictions</p> 	
<p>Questions</p> 	
<p>Visualizations</p> 	
<p>Connections</p> 	
<p>Evaluations</p> 	
<p>Clarifications</p> 	



Appendix D

Evaluate the Socratic Seminar

<u>Exemplary</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>
Everyone participated.	Most students actively participated.	The conversation was dominated by a few students.
Everyone spoke clearly so that all students could hear.	Most students spoke up, but a few were difficult to hear.	Several students were hard to hear and were asked to repeat themselves.
Everyone listened and was able to summarize the previous speaker.	Most students were able to summarize the previous speaker, but a few were unable to do so.	Several students were not listening and could not summarize the previous speaker.
Students were able to stick to the topic throughout the whole discussion with little to no sidebar conversations.	Students occasionally got off topic and were redirected. There were few to no sidebar conversations.	The students were often redirected in their conversation. There were many sidebar conversations.
Most students were able to make a connection between themselves and the text and perhaps even a few made connections between this text and another text.	Students were able to make a few connections between their lives and the events in the text.	Students struggled making connections with the novel.
Many students were able to cite support from the text when making their argument.	Several students were able to cite support.	Students struggle making connections with the novel.
Students were able to defend their position and offer counterarguments to those who disagreed.	Students were able to defend their position, but could offer limited counterarguments.	Students were incapable of defending their position.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Students who spoke once**

**Students who spoke twice**

**Students who spoke three times**

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## Appendix E

### Symbolism Collage

In this activity, you and your Cooperative Learning Group will come up with symbols that you find in the novel. The task is relatively easy; the analysis not so much. In this collage of pictures, quotes, and reactions, you and your group will decide upon what symbols you find within the text and ones we discuss in class.

1. List these symbols,
2. what they represent,
3. a quote that led you to your inference,
4. and your group's thoughts and reactions to this idea.

From this list, create a collage filling the entire page with pictures and words. There should be no blank spaces on your poster. For your pictures you may use magazine pictures, pictures from the newspaper, or pictures you printed from the internet.

### **Materials for Classroom use:**

Classroom set of *The Glory Field*  
Copies of *Bad Boy*  
Computers/Printers  
Internet access for students and teacher  
LCD Projector and Screen  
Laptop with CDROM  
Video Cassette Recorder

### **Reading List for Students:**

*The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Bad Boy* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Harlem* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Malcolm X* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Patrol* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Fallen Angel* by Walter Dean Myers  
*145th Street Stories* by Walter Dean Myers  
"Veterans make up 1 in 4 Homeless" by Matt Rourke  
"The Drummer Boy of Shiloh" by Ray Bradbury  
"Lay Freedom Among Us" by Rita Dove  
"Runagate Runagate" by Robert Hayden  
"An American Childhood" by Annie Dillard  
*The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson

### **Teacher Resources**

Kagan, Spencer. *Kagan Cooperative Learning* . 1994. Reprint, San Clemente: Kagan

Cooperative Learning , 1997.

This resource is great for teachers who want to optimize the use of the cooperative learning group in their classroom.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Bad Boy: A Memoir*. New York: Amistad Press, 2002.

This novel is used to supplement the central text of the unit. It provides a lot of biographical information on Mr. Myers.

Myers, Walter Dean. *The Glory Field*. New York: Scholastic Paperbacks, 2008.

This novel is central to the unit plan. The novel is a work of historical fiction used in the middle school classroom.

IBO. "The International Baccalaureate Programme." The International Baccalaureate

Programme. [www.ibo.org/](http://www.ibo.org/) (accessed November 25, 2012).



This website is a resource for teachers in the International Baccalaureate Programme with access to many great ideas and units for use in the classroom.

"Teaching Practices: The National Paideia Center." The National Paideia Center.

<http://www.paideia.org/about-paideia/teaching-practices/> (accessed November 25, 2012).

Using this website was used to research the concept of the Padiea Seminar/Socratic Seminar. It gives detailed instructions on how to implement that strategy.

Woods, Karen, and Bruce Taylor. *Literacy Strategies Across the Subject Ar*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2005.

This resource should be in every teacher's classroom. This is used throughout the year to meet literacy requirements. It can be used by anyone with black outline reprintables and permission to reprint with the purchase of the text.

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