



***The Progression of Group Dynamics: How Small Groups Can Make A Large Impact***

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Francis Bradley Middle School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts

**Keywords:** social groups, power, dystopian, utopia, leadership, factions, team-building

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix B](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This curriculum unit utilizes three novels to expose and analyze the group dynamic and how power and leadership emerge in various situations. The novels are *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. Each novel study includes analysis of the main characters in the novel, examining the protagonist's struggles and the antagonist's tactics. Finally, the students are exposed to real-world situations when they research the hunt for utopia in historical and modern day societies.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year in to 65 students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts.*

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# The Progression of Group Dynamics: How Small Groups Can Make A Large Impact

*Megan Woazeah*

## Rationale

In my years as a student and now an educator, it has been essential for my success to work collaboratively at times with other individuals. This is not a new concept, nor is it one that can be explored in a short amount of time. The inner working of groups is a multi-layered idea with several different relationships happening at the same time. As I continue to use collaborative efforts more frequently in my classes, I feel it is essential to explore how and why they work and then to present the knowledge of such to my students via a curriculum unit.

The unit would explore the ideas of how “the masses” have worked together in instances to create a climate of change. Students would explore the concepts of groups they identify with and how each shapes their individual identity. Such groups that students would explore would be: family, sports teams, clubs, youth groups, age groups/generations, classes and classmates/peers, and cultural groups. In working with students this year on my unit, I have found a lack of knowledge or understanding on the concept of diversity. Studying the human social groups and their functions would lead perfectly into analysis of diversity.

This unit would also coincide with a year-long study of literature focusing on conformity, leadership, governmental control, and dystopian societies. The 8th grade curriculum includes *Animal Farm*, *The Giver*, *Fahrenheit 451*, the *Divergent* series, and the *Hunger Games* series. I would also incorporate Ray Bradbury’s short stories (*The Veldt*) and other dystopian literature.

As each year progresses, I begin the year in similar fashion: assessing the qualities of strength and weakness in each of my students. This includes knowledge of subject (Language Arts), knowledge of self, knowledge of learning style, knowledge of maturational progress, and knowledge of societal norms. These categories of knowledge embody several different assessments. At the end of the assessments, however, is always a similar result. I find that students, without regard to their intellectual levels of understanding and their maturational stages, function at approximately the same level of societal understanding. Quite simply put, my students are naïve. They have grown up without being asked to question, “Why?”

I teach at Francis Bradley Middle School in Huntersville, North Carolina. My current students are 8<sup>th</sup> graders. They are between 12-14 years of age. There is a noticeable split between the family income averages. Approximately 50-65% of my students come from families that are

considered middle class. Their parent or parents earn a salary that is enough to provide basic needs and beyond basic needs. Another 35-50% of my students come from families where their parent or parents earn less than an appropriate amount to provide basic needs for the student/family.

My students also come from diverse home situations. The range includes students with biological parents still married, biological parents separated and contemplating divorce, biological parents going through or completed in the process of divorce, biological parents remarried and step-parents included, single parent homes, no biological parents present, and/or living with grandparents. This creates a unique situation when it comes to family perspective. Students maintain different sets of values and it is apparent in the classroom when we engage in full-class discussions.

Another aspect of our diverse classroom is the amount of English as Second Language learners. I have a minimal number of ESL students, but it affects the nature of the classroom.

According to the Bradley School Improvement Plan, “Presently, we have 1153 students enrolled— 31% African-American students, 56% White students, 9% Hispanic, 2% Asian and about 2% of our students come from other races and ethnicities.”<sup>1</sup>

Academically, the former 7th grade class passed the End of Grade test last year with an average of 45%. This is not the typical score that we teachers at Bradley are used to seeing. Because of these lower-than-average scores, we are working harder this year to promote growth for our students.

This unit is designed for use in an 8th grade language arts classroom. The unit will be comprised of fiction, with supplements of nonfiction and film. Students will read novels and texts that share the similar genre of dystopian literature. Students will move through three novels throughout the year to address how groups impacted the conflicts, climax, and resolution of the stories. This allows for a shift to nonfiction text and the analysis of current events.

I hope that through this unit, students will gain first & foremost an understanding of their own functions in groups. Beyond just an understanding, I want students to engage in the creation, functioning, and dissolution of groups. We will work fluidly as a class to discover the impact of groups, individuals, and technological advancement on society today.

The other concepts that I want students to explore are freedom, equality, systems of government, oppression, power, and cooperation. Students will explore through research & Socratic seminars the meaning of the terms and how they are expressed throughout our society today.

Some products I am looking for the students to create are: lineage charts, life timelines, journals, analyses of text (fiction & nonfiction), prose, poetry, songs, posters, Socratic seminars, newspapers. These products will document students' journeys and responses to the impact of group dynamics.

## Objectives

This unit is based on the Common Core standards. These standards are for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts class. The standards' categories that will be addressed in this unit are as follows:

- a. Reading for Literature
- b. Reading for Information
- c. Writing
- d. Speaking and Listening

For an annotated list, with specific information on exactly how the standards will be addressed, please see Appendix B.

The objectives of this unit are based on the aforementioned standards. The first objective is for students to read and understand the purposes of dystopian literature in regards to society and groups. The purpose for this unit is to emphasize the relevance small groups had in regard to big changes in society. Students will be able to successfully discuss the ideas of power in society and how leadership affects the society. Students will also be able to compare and contrast the societies of *Divergent*, *The Giver*, and *Fahrenheit 451*, identifying the groups and what led to the success of specific groups in each novel.

A second objective is for students to translate their understanding of the fictional societies to the real societies of history. Students will complete a final assessment in the form of a project to identify a society that is comparable to one of the societies in one of the three novels. Students will use evidence from the text of the novel to compare and contrast the real-world society in a visual presentation. The project will also ask students to identify the small group that was the agent for change in the society.

The third and final objective is for students to recognize themes and symbols in dystopian literature. Students will create graphic organizers, posters, presentations, etc. to show themes and symbols from each novel. At the end of the study, students will be able to discuss themes and symbols that were common to all of the dystopian literature. Students will also be able to use the text to identify these themes and symbols and justify their answers and discussion with textual evidence.

## Strategies and Activities

This unit is designed flexibly as far as the length. It can be minimized or expanded at the instructor's discretion. Because there are three novels for discussion, there are many more activities and strategies that can be implemented throughout the novel studies. This unit is an overview of how to utilize specific novels to teach students about the science of groupings and the impact of societies formed into specific groups.

### *Activities to Foster Cohesion Amongst Groups*

Before working in groups for the unit, it is important to emphasize and encourage the small group of the class. In order to create a more cohesive class, it is recommended that the entire class participate in activities to create a bond.

These activities are better known as “team-building” activities. One of the benefits of my school is that we have a team-building course on the school property. However, with the understanding that some schools do not, there are several activities that can be done to create a more cohesive group environment.

#### 1. Lines

- a. The intended outcome of this activity is that the members will be arranged in a line in a specific, pre-determined order. The strategy is to limit communication and anticipate some frustration. This will allow member to work harder on the aspects that are involved in communication (eye contact, physical movement, etc.)
  - i. Birthdays: all members must organize themselves in order of birthdate. An easier version is just in order of month, a harder version is in exact order.
  - ii. Age: all members will arrange themselves in order from oldest to youngest, or vice versa. With a class, many of the students will be of the same age, so this will also take birthdate into account (if the instructor sets that boundary first).
  - iii. Number of siblings: all members will arrange themselves by number of siblings (least amount to greatest amount, or vice versa).
  - iv. Number of pets: all members will arrange themselves by number of pets (least amount to the greatest amount, or vice versa).
  - v. Numerical portion of their address: group members will arrange themselves in order from smallest number to largest using their home address number.

#### 2. Puzzle Pieces

- a. Any activity where members are responsible to work on their individual piece, while helping to create a larger product within the group, gives ownership of the group to each person. One activity is to have a cartoon picture cut into pieces (1 per group member). The individuals get their piece & are asked to recreate the image on their piece without seeing the end product first. Then they give back the original pieces and use their own created pieces to put the puzzle together as a group.
- b. To debrief, have groups discuss the following questions:
  - i. How did this activity reinforce the idea of teamwork?
  - ii. Did your group complete the activity successfully? Why or why not?
  - iii. How did leadership factor in to your completing the task efficiently or not? How was leadership established?

#### 3. Minefield

- a. This activity reinforces teamwork. For this activity, students can be in their novel study small groups or an entire class. The latter would be more difficult but can be measured for success by timing the group’s efforts. This activity can also be a partnered activity.
- b. Students will join side by side to walk across a designated area. Students must link arms and stay side by side the entire time traversing the course. The instructor needs to set up prior to arriving. There should be obstacles set out on the path. These can be books, pieces of paper, crates, jump ropes in circles, etc. Whatever material is available will work. These will serve as “mines”. The idea is

to get the group across the field without running into a mine. If the group does touch a mine, they must return to the starting point.

- c. Some ideas for increasing difficulty: Students must remain in contact with the sides of their feet. They must return to the starting point any time any person's feet come apart. Also, you can blindfold any given number of the members.
  - d. A variation is to have partners that must decide on one to be the "talker" and another to be the "walker". The "talker" must direct the "walker" across the minefield by simply speaking or yelling directions to the blindfolded "walker". The "talker" must stay at the finish line of the course.
  - e. To debrief, students should discuss the following questions:
    - i. How did your role affect your team's ability to complete the designated task?
    - ii. How did your team do? What led to their success/failure?
    - iii. How did leadership play a part in the success or failure of your group?
    - iv. Did you feel that the group could have done better? Why?
    - v. How does the communication of any given group lead the group to success or failure? How does that work in terms of a society? A government?
4. Capture the Flag
- a. This is a common game that children can play. The degree of difficulty can be set by the instructor or leader in charge. There are many ways that the rules can be altered to change the degree of difficulty. The common idea is that two teams have flags and each team hides their flag. The objective of the game is to find the opposing team's flag and carry it over to the home side in order to be declared the winner.
  - b. Before the game, it is important to go over the rules with the class. Basic rules are listed in Appendix A. Students can also have short discussion to ensure that they all understand and agree upon the rules. The area for play should also be defined along with boundaries and off-limit areas.
  - c. After the game, it is important to discuss the meaning of the game. A few predetermined questions:
    - i. How did your team interact? Was there cooperation or confusion?
    - ii. How was leadership established? Was there a group consensus, an implied leader, a leader that took control, etc.? How did the establishment of leadership affect the group interactions?
    - iii. What was the key for the success of the winners? What was the downfall for the failure of the losing team?
  - d. To extend this activity, leadership in groups can be discussed and presented as notes on social groups.
5. Notes on Leadership in Groups
- a. There are five types of power that describe the relationship between a leader and followers<sup>ii</sup>.
    - i. Reward Power
    - ii. Coercive Power
    - iii. Legitimate Power
    - iv. Expert Power

- v. Referent Power
- b. In order to explain these five types of power, it is beneficial to give real-life comparisons. This is where a real-world connection can be made. For each example of power, there is a figure that can be used as the example figure.
  - i. Reward Power- Teacher & students in a class
  - ii. Coercive Power- Adolf Hitler & German citizens
  - iii. Legitimate Power- A boss & employees
  - iv. Expert Power- Doctor & patients
  - v. Referent Power- Mentor & mentee
- c. Students can use the power concepts to identify the relationships in the novel studies. Students should be able to create a graphic organizer or visual representation to show the various leaders and their groups. The visual representation should incorporate the five types of power and it should express the relationships that each leader had with the society.

### *Literature Circles*

The benefit of small groups or groupings based on the literature itself is that the process then sets up the class for literature circles. There are many different ways to group, but teachers often find that an ideal number for literature circles are between 4 to 5 students per group. Depending on the class size, this could be feasible, or may need to be altered.

Harvey Daniels gives insight to placing students in groups and assigning roles<sup>iii</sup>. Some of the “basic roles” that Daniels lists are: Connector, Questioner, Literary luminary/passage master, & Illustrator. Some optional roles are: Summarizer, Researcher, Vocabulary Enricher, and Travel Tracer/Scene Setter. It can be argued that in a Language Arts class, the Vocabulary Enricher is a more vital role than simply “optional”. To insure success with the literature circles it is important to go over the procedure of the literature circles before beginning. The groups must stay the same for the entire novel in order to get a variety of experiences. Also, pre-planning with typing up role sheets is a real time-saver. See Appendix A for some basic literature circle role sheets for groups of four.

### *Other Activities*

1. Mafia
  - a. This is a card game that allows the entire class to participate in a game where members silently work together to save or eliminate members of the larger group.
  - b. The groups: At the beginning of the game there are 4 Doctors (Ace Cards), 4 Police (King Cards), 8 Mafia (Queen & Jack Cards), and the rest of the numerical cards represent townspeople. The teacher is the coordinator of the game. If there are smaller numbers, split the numbers of the face card groups in half—just be sure to adjust the cards.
  - c. At the beginning, each person randomly selects their role card. The rules are explained. When the coordinator says, “Go to sleep”, all members close their eyes. When the coordinator says for a specific group to “wake up”, the members of that group only open their eyes to decide on an individual to investigate

- (Police), to save (Doctors), or to eliminate (Mafia). The coordinator has to pay attention to any overlap and announce if a person has been saved or was eliminated while the group was “asleep”.
- d. Throughout the game, any individuals that are eliminated can silently observe to see who were members of each group and see how the groups function independently and in connection with each other.
  - e. To debrief, students should discuss the observations made and how the communication and leadership in each group affected the overall functioning of the game.
    - i. How did your role impact your participation in the game? How did others participate?
    - ii. Did you take on a role of leadership? Did it give you power? What type of power did you exhibit? Was it based on your role?
    - iii. How did your group (Police, Doctors, Mafia, or Townspeople) function? Was your group efficient at your role? Did you define your role or goal for the game? Did your group cooperate? Why or why not?
    - iv. Does this game echo the functioning of society? Current society? A society from one of the novel studies? Explain with textual evidence.

## **Introduction to the Dystopian Literature genre**

### *Divergent*

Students will begin by reading the latest novel, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth. The novel focuses on a dystopian society where a city is divided into five factions. Each faction is exemplified by a specific characteristic (selflessness, courage, peacefulness, intelligence, & truthfulness). The conflict emerges when a specific group makes a ploy for power. The otherwise “peaceful” society is taken on a journey through war. The book is a part of series which shows a teenager, Tris, and her choice to belong and participate in the functioning of a group.

#### 1. Developing Factions

- a. The novel has a survey created by the author that will help students or individuals identify the faction that they would most identify with based on their responses. The survey is located in the back of the novel (*Divergent*) and it is also in the appendix of this unit plan.
- b. Once the groups are established, students will work to develop “norms” based on the characteristics of each faction in the novel. Students utilize graphic organizers to identify traits that are common amongst each faction. Some of the categories are values, beliefs, appearance, and behaviors. Students can also select to characterize their faction once a week. Most students can opt for the easiest quality, which is dress or appearance. Each faction has a specific color coordination associated with their group: Abnegation-gray, Amity-yellow & red, Candor-black & white, Erudite-blue, and Dauntless-all black. The first “faction” meeting will be utilized to establish how the group will embody their faction, based on the graphic organizers. Each week, groups will participate in a check-in,

where they can discuss additions or subtractions to their original set of norms. As the novel progresses, students will find new ways to embody their faction, sometimes altering the original plan.

2. Role-playing is a tool that can give students insight into the motivations for characters. To start this activity, students will use a graphic organizer to discuss qualities of specific characters. The main characters are:
  - a. Beatrice “Tris” Prior
  - b. Tobias “Four”
  - c. Jeanine Matthews
  - d. Eric
  - e. Christina
  - f. Will
  - g. Peter
  - h. Caleb Prior
  - i. Students can add characters as desired.

In order to role-play, students must first fill out a 3-section organizer that identifies physical descriptions, inner thoughts & desires, and important traits about each character. Students should also come up with scenarios for the groups to utilize as they prepare for the role-playing. What conflicts might occur that you can't see in the novel? How would the character resolve the conflict?

3. Continuing with the idea of the power relationships, what type of relationships are a part of
4. The final activity for the novel is entitled a “choosing ceremony”. The students function in their small groups or factions based on the results of their initial survey. However, after reading and researching information on the characteristics of all factions, students can select or “choose” the faction that they feel they belong in. To create the atmosphere of reverence that is necessary to reflect the importance this ceremony played in the novel, a requirement may be that students dress in more formal attire (more than everyday attire, that is). The classroom or whatever room the ceremony is going to be held in should have seats that are arranged into five sections for the factions. The instructor will need to have five containers, each labeled with a faction name. Students will be given an item to symbolize the blood that the novel's characters used to show their selection of factions. This item will be placed into a container that is labeled with the name of one of the five factions, to show the student's choice of faction. After every student has been sorted into their new factions, there should be time for each new faction to welcome new members and discuss their selections. Some questions to foster discussion amongst the groups:
  - a. If you made a change from your original faction, why did you make the switch?
  - b. If you didn't change factions, why did you choose to remain with your current faction?

### *The Giver*

Students will move from their factions, which are based on characteristics, to assigned groups based on the instructor's outside perspective. This is to model the way family groups are created in the novel *The Giver*. Students will work independently on a few assignments before applying to work in a group. They will list certain qualities they possess and lack, and the groups

will be arranged according to the benefit/deficit order. This refers to groups that are created to weigh out equally for each other's benefits and deficiencies.

Once in their groups, students will research real-life examples of "utopian" societies. They will identify the characteristics of each society, noting positive and negative aspects. There are plenty of examples of societies in current times that claim to be utopian in nature. Students will conduct focused research, meaning that they will look at sites designate by the instructor for research. The sites recommended are: <http://www.ic.org/acorn/>, <http://www.thefarm.org/index.html>, <http://www.twinoaks.org/>, & <http://www.victorycities.com/>.

### *Fahrenheit 451*

This novel is set in a futuristic society where reading is illegal and punishable by death. The title, *Fahrenheit 451*, is known as the temperature at which books burn. The main character, Guy Montag, is a fireman; in this society, firemen set fires instead of putting them out. The novel documents his journey in being a member of the society and adhering to the standards set to bucking the system and breaking the societal rules. The novel, by Ray Bradbury, uses machines as symbols throughout the novel to display how society is growing in its dependence on technology. The underground of society, which reads books and finds wisdom in literature of all types, rejects the reliance on technology.

1. For this novel study, the class will be separated secretly by a slip of paper. This first activity will organize students into three groups: firemen, the underground that reads, and other members of society.
2. For the separation, the students will focus on how the group they are affiliated with functions in the *F451* society. They will fill out a graphic organizer identifying the qualities of the group and the motivations for their action or inaction.

### *Recent & Current Events*

This piece will give relationship from the unit to cross-curricular study. There are many events which can document the establishment, activity, and resolution of group movement. Students will utilize their knowledge of historical or present-day events to find a society or group that is comparable to one of the societies in a novel. Students will use evidence from the text of the novel to compare and contrast the real-world society in a visual presentation. The project will also ask students to identify the small group that was the agent for change in the society.

Some of the historical or present-day events and societies that are comparable are:

1. Civil Wars (United States, Liberia, Syria, etc.)
2. Women's Suffrage Movement
3. World War II and Hitler's Nazi movement in Europe
4. World War II—the United States and the Japanese work camps
5. North Korea
6. Communist movements in Cuba & Russia

## 7. Civil Rights Movement

### Methods for Grouping Students into Learning Groups

In working with small groups in the classroom, one of the biggest questions is how to put students into the groups. There are several ways to work small groups into the classroom.

1. Data from State Assessment Scores
  - a. This method emphasizes the use of the scores from the State Assessments. This could be End of Grade or the quarterly formative assessments. These tests usually focus on specific standards and are curricular-specific. This allows for the instructor to focus in on standards that students didn't do as well on.
  - b. Groups can be tiered within the groups, with a proficient student, average student, and less than average student. Another group can be tiered groups that are proficient, average, or less than average for a specific skill or the overall assessment.
2. Tiered Learning Groups
  - a. This method uses data of any kind to place students into tiered learning groups. The idea is that each group will have a low student, low to average student, and high student. This allows for the cooperation and growth of the low and low-average students, while allowing the high students to grow via teaching or tutoring experiences. (See Appendix A for template)
  - b. Using the data from a reading assessment (STAR Reader from the Accelerated Reader program), students can be placed into small reading groups. The groups are based on data that assigns students an individual reading level. Each group has a low, a low-average, and a high reader. Two to three times weekly, students get into their small groups and read aloud together from a short (30-50 pages) nonfiction text. After spending two or three times in their small group with the text, students take the AR test, which is a 5-10 question comprehension quiz.
  - c. Using the data from the MAPS assessment, students are placed into tiered small groups to complete other group assignments, such as vocabulary assignments, nonfiction and current events assignments, and literature circles.
3. Student Choice
  - a. This method, while often appearing to lack preparation, allows the teacher to see the dynamics of how students work well together. When grouping students in their groups of choice, the teacher can utilize a self-assessment at the end of the activity or class so that students can observe the manner in which they completed their work. Was the group successful in reaching the goal or completing the task? Was each individual? Why or why not?

## Appendix A

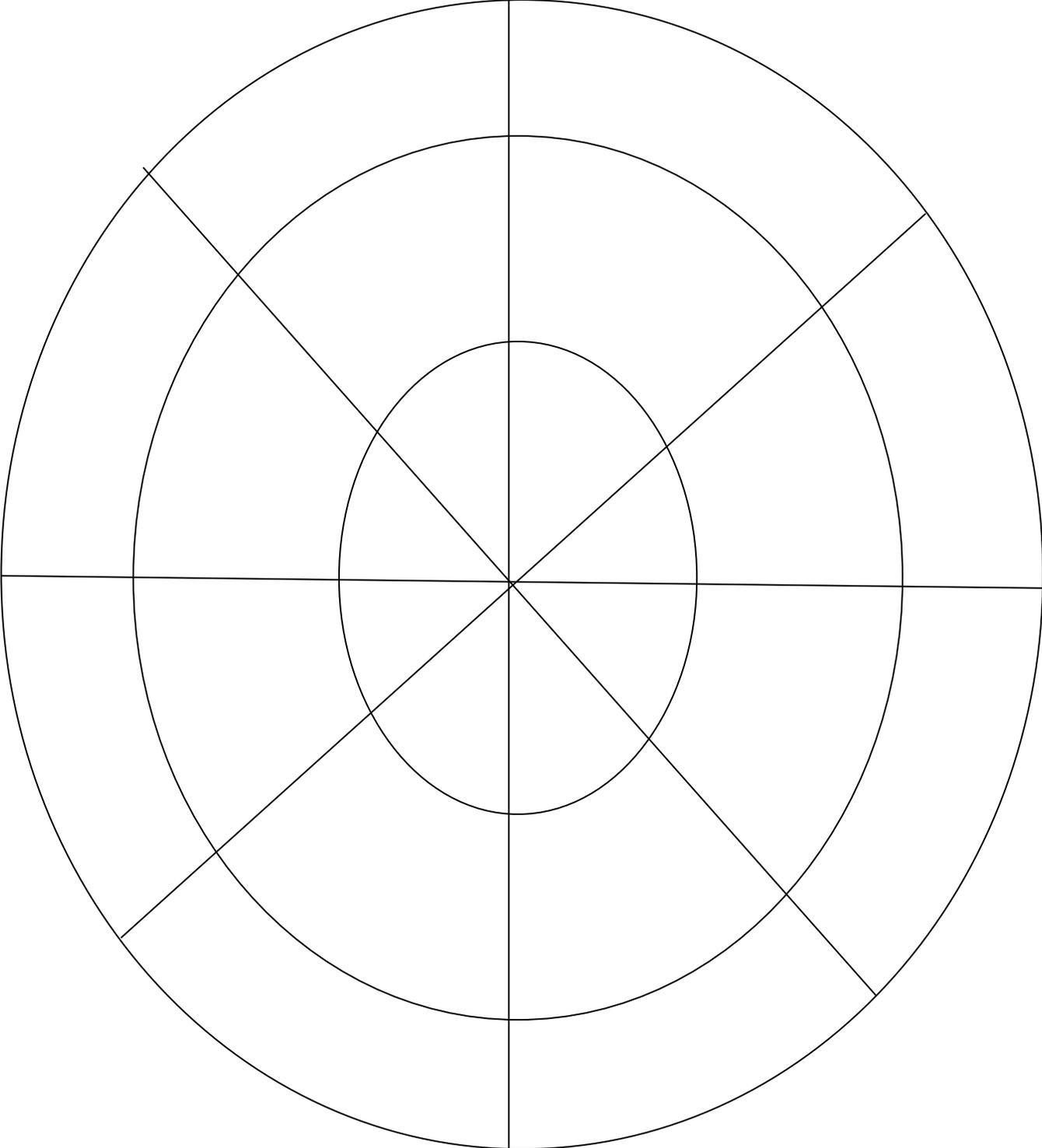
### Worksheets utilized in the Curriculum Unit

1. Divergent Factions Quiz
2. Data Wheel for Tiered Grouping
3. Rules for Capture the Flag
4. Literature Circle Role Sheets (for groups of 4)

## Divergent Factions Quiz

1. You most want you friends and family to see you as someone who ...
  - a. is willing to make sacrifices and help anyone in need
  - b. is liked by everyone
  - c. is trustworthy
  - d. will protect them no matter what
  - e. offers wise advice
2. When you are faced with a difficult problem, you react by ...
  - a. doing whatever will be the best for the greatest number of people
  - b. creating a work of art that expresses your feelings about the situation
  - c. debating the issue with your friends
  - d. facing it head on—what else would you do?
  - e. making a list of pros and cons, and then choosing the option that the evidence best supports
3. What activity would you most likely find yourself doing on the weekend of on an unexpected day off?
  - a. volunteering
  - b. painting, dancing, or writing poetry
  - c. sharing opinions with your friends
  - d. rock-climbing or skydiving!
  - e. catching up on your homework or reading for pleasure
4. If you had to select one of the following options as a profession, which would you choose?
  - a. humanitarian
  - b. farmer
  - c. judge
  - d. firefighter
  - e. scientist
5. When choosing your outfit for the day, you select ...
  - a. whatever will attract the least amount of attention
  - b. something comfortable, but interesting to look at
  - c. something that's simple, but still expresses your personality
  - d. whatever will attract the most attention
  - e. something that will not distract or inhibit you from what you have to do for the day
6. If you discovered that a friend's significant other was being unfaithful, you would ...
  - a. tell your friend because you feel it would be unhealthy for him or her to continue in a relationship where such selfish behavior is present
  - b. sit them both down so that you can act as mediator while they talk it over
  - c. tell your friend as soon as possible. You can't imagine keeping that knowledge a secret.
  - d. Confront the cheater! You might also take action by slashing the cheater's tires or egging his or her house—all in the name of protecting your friend, of course
  - e. keep it to yourself. Statistics prove that your friend will find out eventually
7. What would you say is your highest priority right now?
  - a. serving those around you
  - b. finding peace and happiness for yourself
  - c. seeking truth in all things
  - d. developing your strength of character
  - e. success in work or school

Data Wheel



## **Rules for Capture the Flag**

1. Each team will have a flag with a color that represents your group.
2. You must hide the flag in a place that is visible to the human eye and able to be reached without assistance or distress.
3. You cannot have more than 2 people guarding the flag within 10 feet of the flag.
4. You must physically bring the flag over to your side of the playing area in order to win.
5. If you are tagged while in the opposing team's area, you are captured and put in the opposing team's jail. In order to escape jail, a team member must come without being captured to break you out.

# Literature Circle Roles

## Detailer/Summarizer

In your own words, describe what took place in this section using specific details from the book. In parenthesis, write the page numbers of the specific details mentioned in your summary. EX: detail (pg. #)

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Cut Here



## Questioner

Pretend that you are a teacher and write two discussion questions for this section of the book. When the time keeper tells you it is time, share the questions with your group. Then, answer the questions and write the answers on the back of your sheet. Make sure your group members know that the answers must be written in FULL SENTENCES.

1. Discussion Question:

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2. Discussion Question:

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# Literature Circle Roles

## Vocabulary Enricher

Choose 2 words from the reading that you are unsure about. Using context clues, what do you think is the meaning of each word? (Answer this question in your own words.) Then, use a dictionary to locate and write the actual definition of each word. When the time keeper tells you it is time, share the words with your group members and have them write the words and the definitions (in their own words) on the back of their papers.

1. Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Based on context clues, what do you think it means? \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Based on context clues, what do you think it means? \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Cut Here

## Director/Time Keeper

Your role is to keep group members on task and to keep track of time. You need to encourage group members to stay on task by *gently* reminding them that they have a time limit for each activity.

Names of members in your group: \_\_\_\_\_

Detailer/Summarizer: \_\_\_\_\_ Questioner: \_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Enricher: \_\_\_\_\_

At your teacher's direction, fill in the following blanks with times for each activity. Then, keep track of the time and remind members when it is their time to share with the group:

\_\_\_\_\_ minutes for individual work

\_\_\_\_\_ minutes for QUESTIONER to share with group & group members to complete discussion questions

\_\_\_\_\_ minutes for VOCABULARY ENRICHER to share with group & group members to complete words

## REVERSE SIDE FOR LITERATURE CIRCLE ROLE SHEETS

Answers to questions from QUESTIONER:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Words and Definitions from VOCABULARY ENRICHER:

1. Word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  2. Word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 

Answers to questions from QUESTIONER:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary Words and Definitions from VOCABULARY ENRICHER:

1. Word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Definition: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Implementing District Standards

#### Objectives

This unit is based on the Common Core standards. These are for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts class. The standards that will be addressed in this unit are as follows:

- e. Reading for Literature
  - a. 8.1 This standard refers to textual evidence. In working through discussion questions, this unit will help students to rely on textual evidence in supporting their ideas and answers.
  - b. 8.2 Theme is addressed in this standard, which is very relevant to this unit. The symbolism and themes in each of the three novels all bring the dystopian literature unit together. The themes of the novels help to emphasize the importance and relevance of small groups to make an impact on the larger society.
  - c. 8.3 This standard refers to analysis of dialogue and situations in the story that move the action along. This is an examination of the plot diagram. (See Appendix A)
  - d. 8.4 This standard talks about examining words and phrases in the text to conclude meaning. Students will be discussing various terms from the novels when they read, often taking unknown words and inferring meaning.
  - e. 8.5 Because of the three focus texts, this standard of comparing and contrasting texts and how their structure contributes to meaning is a skill that will be used for this unit.
- f. Reading for Information
  - a. 8.1 Students will be using knowledge and evidence from nonfiction texts to support their analysis of leaders and the role of power in real-life societies.
- g. Writing
  - a. 8.1 Students will be working to support claims about characters' use of power, roles in society, leadership, and activities that each individual and the class participate in. Some of the discussions can and should be extended into writing.
  - b. 8.2 Students will also be working to write informative pieces that examine concepts without actually forcing a position. Students will work on answering questions about the novels and activities.

#### Speaking and Listening

- a. 8.1 Students will engage in many various types of discussion.
- b. 8.4 Students will present their claims from previous written assignments in a persuasive speech.

## **Bibliography for Teachers**

Daniels, Harvey. 2002. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs & Reading Groups*. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers.

This book discusses a variety of ways to incorporate small groups into a novel study via a literature circle. The formation of the groups for each novel study is not only a tool for bridging the experience of the novel but to set up literature circles.

Francis Bradley Middle School. 2012-2013. "School Improvement Plan."

This is the plan that was developed after the 2011-2012 school year. It has the data for various groupings for our school. This resource allows the reader to focus in on specific small groups that are in need of more direct focus for instruction and additional assistance.

Green, R. Dennis. 1999. "Leadership As A Function Of Power." *Proposal Management* 54-56.

This article is short, but gives two very concise charts to assist with the notes on power and leadership. The article identifies the five types of power and how they factor into relationships between leaders and group members.

## **Reading List for Students**

*Allegiant* by Veronica Roth

*Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins

*Divergent* by Veronica Roth

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry

*Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins

*Insurgent* by Veronica Roth

*Messenger* by Lois Lowry

*Son* by Lois Lowry

"The Veldt" by Ray Bradbury

*The Wave* by Todd Strasser

## Materials for Classroom Use

*Divergent* book study PDF by the Presbyterian Youth Book Club. This resource, while put together by a religious organization, has a few extra activities and discussion questions that could be used in the classroom.

([http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/youthministry/pdf/divergent\\_book\\_study.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/youthministry/pdf/divergent_book_study.pdf))

The *Divergent* series is a book series with three novels that center on a dystopian society and government that controls much of the lives of its citizens. The novel is utilized in the unit and the two novels following continue the saga. This series would be great for choice reading or literature circles. The first film comes out in theaters Spring 2014.

The *Hunger Games* series is a series of three novels that have similar situations and themes as *Divergent*. The books can be utilized for choice reading that coincides with the dystopian literature theme, or for literature circles. There are also two films currently out (1 on DVD and 1 in theaters).

TeachersPayTeachers.com is a site that often has free resources uploaded by other teachers for free download. There are also units put together for sale. The units vary in size and content, but there is a preview option to see what each package offers.

The novel *The Wave* by Todd Strasser and the video clips/ movie is an excellent display of how society can be taken under by a powerful movement, such as in World War II and the Nazi party. The novel is short, only approximately 150 pages, so it is something that can supplement any part of this unit. It is helpful as students frequently say that they would not have been as gullible or as weak as the members of societies that did give in to corrupt leaders or gove

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<sup>i</sup>(Francis Bradley Middle School 2012-2013)

<sup>ii</sup>(Green 1999)

<sup>iii</sup>(Daniels 2002)