



## ***Two Roads Diverged in a Yellow Wood: The Path of Heroes***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:

All levels of English as a Second Language from Middle School to High School

**Keywords:** Hero, Idol, Ideal, Character, Values, Endurance, Courage, Honesty, Loyalty and Integrity, choices

**Teaching Standards:** See Appendix 1 for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This unit is designed for grades 6, 7, and 8 native English speaking struggling readers and ELL WiDA Levels 1-5 language levels with a special focus on transitioning levels 1 and 1.5 to 2 and 2.5 levels for simultaneous text and academic language acquisition. Celebrating everyday heroes, the unit has a Montessori-like flow and supports the individual learner to the maximum extent possible. It is a unit of stories about children challenged to make extraordinary choices. The poem “Oppression,” by Jimmy Santiago Baca, introduces the twin themes of struggle and *memento viveri*, remembering to live—a moving topic from our CTI seminar on close reading. Novel choices are poignant vignettes from *Soft Rain*, *Iqbal*, *Red Scarf Girl*, and *In the Time of the Butterflies* and finish with the hopeful theme of *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*. Students use graphic organizers for essential information synthesis into Cornell Notes with signal words and guide constructions for rapid language development in the differentiated classroom. The unit’s goal is to move 1& 2 levels to 2/3 texts from *StudySync*. We use an adapted S.I.O.P.’s text organizer for close reading paired through *Shadow Reading* and virtual annotation in a text-to-text exercise. To meet higher-level student we use tiered reading and the virtual close reading experience, which also supports writing. *Quizlet* provides dynamic realtime practice opportunities to learn foundational vocabulary. PEAK’s *Muddy Paw*, *Table Races*, *Classified Learning* and *Search and Rescue* provide a heuristic pattern search for knitting knowledge on several levels. Formulaic writing with the tagmemes *have*, *has*, and *had* create a power written product supported through a flowchart and writing models assist in accelerated academic knowledge. A variety of unique intervention strategies facilitate it all.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 16 students in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in ESL classes.*

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## Two Roads Diverged in a Yellow Wood: The Path of Heroes

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### Rationale

“...and I – I took the one less travelled by, and that has made all the difference...”  
Robert Frost.<sup>1</sup>

With its vocabulary focus, the essential question for this entire unit is “What defines a hero?” This is the stepping stone to a deeply personal question: *What would you do if..?* The topic of what makes a hero is a path of a series of difficult choices diverged in the forest of possibilities and forged by character that lights a glimmer to the future. This spirit of this unit is embodied in the Robert F. Kennedy quotation: “Each time a man stands for an ideal, or acts to improve the lots of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers for energy and daring those ripples build a current which sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”<sup>2</sup>

There are several things to remember when conducting this unit. The absolute foundation is Stephen Pinker’s recursive language philosophy. The general public recognizes his contribution in the application of Bill Gates’ and Steven Jobs’ creative distinctions between software and hardware. It applies to other fields, such as engineering, the law, science, and teaching. I thank the insightfulness of educational leaders such as Stephen Krashen, Robert Marzano, Carol Ann Tomlinson, Howard Gardner, Deborah Short and the C.A.L. Institute team, Harry and Rosemary Wong, Lilly Wong Fillmore, Margarita Calderón and the ExcEIl team vocabulary focus support, Spence Rogers and team at PEAK Learning Systems, Incorporated brain based games, WiDA team’s rules and structure as well as contributors like Dr. Elizabeth Spelke of Harvard University, and the staff at *The Human Spark*. They honor the organic process of learning. I hope to do these great people justice in integrating their guiding philosophies in addressing special language needs.

We begin first with Dr. Pinker’s philosophy that language acquisition is a search for patterns in an infinite loop<sup>3</sup>. We next look at the four amplitudes of a Tomlinson differentiation model. The general structure of the unit is predicated on Carol Ann Tomlinson’s amplitudes<sup>4</sup>. The core maxim of language learning is that language is never learned in isolation. Visualize these four amplitudes overlaid with a fishbone organizer. The top half of the fishbone represents the live language experiences and the lower half of the fishbone represents structured classroom activities and tasks for all modality at increasing levels of independence, as exemplified through Webb’s Knowledge and Depth Taxonomy. I use the WiDA definitions for activities and tasks<sup>5</sup>. Then the unit moves from one-day activities to a blended phase of activities to tasks, which require one to two days for completion. From this phase it moves to full tasks that generally last two days. The final phase is an integrated product that varies

according to the individual's skill. The method I explain is one of economical pattern making through classified and tiered cue vocabulary, graphic organizers, and infographic presentation. The infographic approach, PowerPoint, is key for sharpening focus through color, information organization and synthesis, as well as possible animation for making points.

The unit story vignettes are from *Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears* by Cornelia Cornelissen, pages 28-31; *Iqbal: A Novel by Francesco D'Adamo*, pages 18-21; *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-Li Jiang, pages 223-227, and *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez, pages 8-9 for review. An exciting story of ingenuity is the capstone vignette, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. With the exception of *Soft Rain*, these entire story vignettes are reprinted in the McGraw-Hill program called *StudySync*, generally for WiDA tested 2-3 levels. My unit requires the reader to create adapted texts for their newcomers in an adaptation of a C.A.L. Institute graphic organizer<sup>6</sup>. This is provided by the *fair use clause* of copyright law for teachers. Check with the publisher for permission. Publishers are generally very amenable for up to three pages.

My classification schema groups vocabulary into *content, academic, thematic, and text* categories with corresponding sentence starters and cue questions for amalgamation. The academic words I chose were a limited set of classification, sequencing, compare and contrast words, supported with organizers and posters. I chose a theme of *hero characteristics* as a connector across the literary texts. I chose words from each vignette that I have found challenge the entry-level language learner and have wide application. For content, I chose foundational words that occur in language arts and social studies. Moreover, I chose question starters that guide language production and higher-level thinking. A cued Cornell Notes supports integration of sentences. Information is broken down for recognition of print and production of single word or more responses to *Wh-* question, i.e., *Who, What, When, Where, Why* and *How*. All students will integrate these constructs in an  $i + 1$ <sup>7</sup> experience to shift toward the next language level. The web-like structure of this unit is a recursive and language rich soup to create an image of a culture's perspective on what makes a hero and what is a mere idol.

Practice of that information is a key feature of this unit, as language building is an infinite loop in a search for patterns to advance the understanding of the relationship between structure and function of the content and apply it<sup>8</sup>. Focus on key vocabulary and their associated meaning is primary for movement to the next phase of learning. Research indicates a need for twenty-eight interactions over a period of three weeks for acquisition of one concept PEAK<sup>9</sup>The premise for middle and high school language learner success is that they already have language constructs in place from which they can draw reference to build a connection for more rapid comprehension. For struggling learners, newcomers, students with interrupted formal education, or for those coming from different writing systems, there is an urgent need for an economical path to mastery, sprinkled with phonics corrections and guidance. This unit provides one possible answer.

I also use a unique set of interventions. I use blue covered desks for shaping focus with text discussion and question/answer prompts at the corners of the desks.

I also use hand signals for first language transfer issues and word attack skills. I was inspired to try a very different strategy with decoding at school with ELL students after observing our hearing impaired population. I trained on Visual Phonics and used its hand signals with great success, but I didn't know why it worked, and it took time to begin seeing a pattern of when to apply it. I was thrilled after watching a PBS series hosted by Alan Alda called *The Human Spark*<sup>10</sup> that featured a professor from Harvard University's psychology department who explained a pattern of human behavior. An interview with Dr. Elizabeth Spelke about systems of knowledge included a demonstration with a young boy about the necessity of manipulating symbols with language. I reasoned this to be applicable to the beginning stages of language acquisition in general and confirmed it. It applies to all languages when a student isn't connecting sounds to the written word for word attack skills development. I still use it today and have determined it is a temporary tool for most that will be discarded after knowledge is fixed in the student's mind. An example application is to redirect with A.S.L.'s V sign to correct for indigenous dialect transfer of *b* substitution for *v* in the Caribbean basin Spanish speakers. If the problem persists with a student, support this with the creation of a table of words using first language interference sounds and practice the transfer problem sound outside of class with them for mastery. Do a Boolean search through a search engine under *Phonics Transfer* for one that is most applicable to you.

## **Objectives and Standards**

There are three sets of standards that this unit addresses: state, federal, and WiDA mandates for ELL learners. It also addresses state and federal mandates for struggling readers. I advocate for dovetailing language objectives to support all content objectives as actively as possible. The initial point of goal setting for any ESL teacher is the choice of WiDA objectives. This unit focuses on Social and Instructional objectives, as well as the Language of Language Arts and the Language of Social Studies. See the Appendix for more in-depth explanation.

## **Strategies**

### A Teacher's Manifesto

Every strategy a teacher uses is an advocacy for every student's highest good.

### *Teacher and Student Organizational Strategies*

Students' needs shape the strategies we use in the classroom. First, teachers must look to the legally prescribed requirements of any individualized learning plan recommendations. Our district provides ELL plans through a program called *ELLevations*. For correlation to language levels and multiple intelligences, Michael

Lujan's *Master Instructional Strategies* flipchart through *Mentoring Minds* is invaluable. It is a checklist of tools to prompt lesson planning to address needs for all phases of student development through correlation.

Unit products are contained in a portfolio with a checklist and objectives noted. Glue a copy of the objectives on the front of the folder. Leave the interior blank for contents. Provide a checklist of all activities and completion dates in a four column chart glued to the back of the folder. The first column is labelled to the order of the activity, task or power product. The second column is the label of the activity, task or power product, and the third column is the completion date. The fourth column assigns the grade.

*Student Needs Strategies: Multiple Intelligence Surveys, Inattention Blindness and Hand Signals, and Cognates*

My initial intervention after state determined needs assessments is a multiple intelligences survey at Birmingham Grid for Learning<sup>11</sup> because of their language support. Correlate your survey results with the *Mentoring Minds* flipchart recommendations. I chose:

- For the *linguistic intelligence*, vocabulary games are preferred. *Quizlet* is perfect for providing practice opportunities for print awareness and meaning association. *Quizlet* has a dictation feature with private real-time orthographic correction students accept more readily than some will from an adult.
- For the *logical-mathematical* intelligence, discover patterns of human behavior, key for making inference across the stories and jumpstarted through signal or cue words. *Quizlet* gels correlations into solid knowledge. For the inspired logical student, tease them with the strategy of IF... THEN... ELSE tied to modeled scenarios for addressing mathematical intelligences and higher level thinking.
- For the *spatial* intelligences, deliver infographic instruction<sup>12</sup> format with PowerPoint. Embed links to *Quizlet* online games in the slides which can be loaded on the common 'cloud' of your school server. Students can access these for practice, and interest as in the case of the *kinaesthetic* intelligence, who adore control over their learning and the technology aspect of this method. This is applicable to *intrapersonal* intelligences, who thrive on private practice.
- For *musical intelligences*, I use sentence and question starters in a recursive process, i.e., chunking. This expedites processing. I play Mozart during instruction at a soft level.
- For the *interpersonal intelligence* tested students, conference with this student frequently on concepts supported through whiteboards and dry erase markers.
- For the *intrapersonal* learner, allow them to journal as an additional project for extra credit.
- For the *naturalistic* learner, provide organized information into classification and noticing characteristics.

For all intelligences, the interactive strategy of allowing students to go to *rescue stations* with a whiteboard and dry erase marker with a 1:1 conference for error clarification will facilitate instruction.

I have several strategies for shaping focus in cases of *sighted* or *inattentional blindness*<sup>13</sup>, especially for visual and spatial intelligences. I cover my desks with the calming color of blue paper, an old teaching strategy, and affix text discussion and question starters to the corners of the paper for private cues. Students with reading challenges can have their own printed version of infographic material through the *Notes Page* feature in Power Point under the *Print* option of the same application.

I use Visual Phonics and American Sign Language hand signals as an intervention for first language interference issues and developing word attack skills to support speech and reading with kinaesthetic and spatial intelligences also. They can see the difference, they cannot hear. Once they have it, they drop it and progress.

Use cognates wherever needed. Lists of Spanish cognates are available on the Web and they list false cognates at the same website. For French speakers, true and false cognates are listed at <http://french.about.com/od/vocabulary/a/vraisamis.htm> . German cognates can be found at <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/learn-german-near-cognates.html> . German false cognates are listed at [http://coerll.utexas.edu/gg/gr/mis\\_03.html](http://coerll.utexas.edu/gg/gr/mis_03.html) .

#### *Student Needs: Grouping Strategies*

My preferred grouping strategy is heterogeneous pairing of a stronger student with a more challenged student, especially for the activity of *Shadow Reading*. Reading partners are paired according to strengths and challenges, pairing opposite strengths, simply called *Model Partner*, since a book is a model of a world. We maintain a connection across themes through concept partners from book themes. For *Soft Rain*, *Trail* partners may help with vocabulary For *Iqbal*, *Karachi* partners may dictate to one another. For *In the Time of the Butterflies*, partners will assist with speaking opportunities. For *Red Scarf Girl*, the *Scarf* partner is a rotation partner who will help with the dictation. For *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, these partners peer correct.

#### *Student Needs: Information Organization Strategies through Graphic organizers and Vocabulary Classification with Synonyms for Language Building*

Teachers advocate for their students through organization of information and by offering practice opportunities. We have two inputs: vocabulary and text. The central strategy for the vocabulary base is classification into comprehensible chunks of four categories: content specific for linking across curriculum, academic, theme, and text. I tie an associated question starter each category for facilitation of content mastery and discussion or inquiry. Use synonyms wherever possible to extend the vocabulary base rapidly as a strategy.

The initial engagement strategy for connecting social studies content vocabulary is to build background knowledge in discussions and through visuals. Vocabulary words include *country, leader, politics, conditions, opinion, economics, good, bad, and (un)popular*. Point out the significance of the prefix ‘*un*’ with a separate practice tied to common words for recognizing five common ‘*un*’ words of the reader’s choosing for awareness and solidification of its function in the English language and assess through *Quizlet*. See the *Reading Strategies* section for further information.

The next strategy is to introduce the language arts vocabulary pairs: *beginning, middle, end, characters, setting, problem, conflict, turning point, resolution, rising action, falling action, increase and decrease*. Point out the connection to mathematics for *increase and decrease* to the students so they will see the connection and that will be through academic words and understanding of the knowledge acquisition process as defined in Bloom’s Taxonomy. A good one is on the Internet through Clemson University at:  
<http://www.clemson.edu/assessment/assessmentpractices/referencematerials/documents/Blooms%20Taxonomy%20Action%20Verbs.pdf> .

The next strategy sequence pieces academic words and questions for processing. The knowledge cue words that I use are *define* and *describe* to connect to prior knowledge with bubble or bracket concept organizer in an infographic slide with pictures. The set of question/sentence starters are *What is...* and *Describe what happened*. Associate these with sequence signal words *first, then, next* and *finally* to write short detail sentences that tie to the text. Then use the understanding cue words *compare* and *contrast* as well as *summarize* and *for example* in discussion and written form. *Compare* and *contrast* form the foundation of inference with further associated signal words of *like* and *on the other hand* respectively. The associated question starter for *compare* and *contrast* is *Can you distinguish between ... and ...?* Tie details from the text to *for example*, and the question of *What was the main idea?* . Question starters to be associated with language arts content vocabulary is *What is...? What would happen if...?* and ‘*How would you feel if...?*’. Create a *Quizlet* for all these signal words and let them practice for print awareness. Remember the *Quizlet* feature that allows the student to practice 5-7 words at a time<sup>14</sup> .

*Card Trick* is an alternative. It allows children a kinaesthetic experience to make the word and information lists into flashcards and store them in regular envelopes marked Basic Story Knowledge with the child’s name. Use this with a blank table printed on a regular 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper folded for the children to practice flashcard correlation and support information organization. When finished, surround the flashcards with the table sheet for storage. Use the same cards to apply to the Cornell Notes organizer in a dictation of information exercise.

#### *Student Needs: Reading Strategies*

The overarching theme is the classification of desirable characteristics for a hero and associated synonyms. Use cognates when possible for connection. Lists of language

specific cognates are easily found on the Internet. Theme vocabulary is *hero* or *superman* as opposed to *idol* or *star*, *ideal* or *model*, *courage* or *bravery*, *endurance* or *strength*, *intelligence* or *wisdom*, *discretion* or *caution*, and *compassion* or *kindness*. The associated question starter is *Who is...?* as an initial inquiry and reference. The story associated vocabulary and idioms with the initial and extension text are as follows:

- We begin the unit with the poem “Oppression,” by Jimmy Santiago Baca. For this poem, the text vocabulary is *strength* or *strong*, *unshed* or *not used*, *trample* or *stepped on*, and *birthday* or *the day you were born*. The idiom is *grains of hope* or *small things to hope for*.
- The second story in the sequence is *Soft Rain* by Cornelia Cornelissen. For this poem, the text vocabulary is *recognize* or *identify*, *puzzle* or *problem*, *wagon* or *car*, *soldier* or *fighter*, *cry* or *weep*, *proud* or *pleased*, and *bravery* or *courage*. The idioms are *feelings deep inside her* or *private feelings*, *to think like* or *same opinion*, and *hurry along* or *go*. At this writing, *Soft Rain* has not been adopted by *StudySync*, therefore is finished and will not be explored further as an extension.
- The third in this story is *Iqbal: A Novel* by Francesco D’Adamo, and text vocabulary would be *debt* or *money owed*, *destiny* or *fortune*, *child labor* or *child slavery*, *escape* or *run away*, *carpet maker* or *rug maker*, *cancel* or *stop*. For the *StudySync* leg of the unit, *Iqbal*, vocabulary is *empty* or *not full*, *pain* or *hurt*, *unknown* or *not known*, *dreams* or *imagine*, *greedily* or *hungry*, *courtyard* or *plaza*, *numskulls* or *dummies* with idioms of *bales of cotton* or *cotton bundle* and *stopped dreaming* or *no more imagination*.
- *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-Li Jiang text vocabulary is *afraid* or *scared*, *comrade* or *friend*, *expose* or *open*, *educable* or *able to learn*, *opposite* or *other*, *dismay* or *sad*, and *landlord* or *owner*. The idioms for this vignette are *welcome you* or *embrace* and *head bowed* or *hang head*. For the *StudySync* activity, the recommend vocabulary is *testify* or *swear*, *reform* or *correct*, *condemning* or *criticize*, and *conviction* or *sentence*. Note the multiple meaning of *sentence* with grammatical function as well as legal. The idioms recommended by me are *never imagined this* or *never thought possible* and *come straight to the point* or *speak directly*.
- For the story *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez, the recommended text vocabulary is *cancel* or *gag*, *fortune* or *destiny*, *distance* or *far away*, *future* or *yet to come*, *religious* or *spiritual*, and *laugh* or *giggle*. In the *StudySync* activity, recommended vocabulary for this book is *sire* or *have children*, *clairvoyance* or *premonition*, *gullible* or *innocence*, *agitating* or *aggravating*, *pious* or *pure*. The idioms I recommend are *begging pardon* or *asking excuse me*, and *Can you spare?* or *Can you give me?*
- The capstone story for this unit is the vignette of *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer in *StudySync*. The recommended vocabulary for this story is *harness* or *connect*, *windmill* or *ventilator*, *blades* or *knives*, *machine* or *apparatus*, *pinwheel* or *turn wheel*, *build* or *construct*. The idioms are *free to*

*hang out or be free to be somewhere, produce energy or make power, spin the blades or turn a windmill's knives with wind, rotate a pump or push up and down to make a pump world, and build my own or make my own thing.* In the *Study Sync* activity, recommended words are *Chichewa* as an African language, *hostile or not friendly*, *Archimedes* or a great Greek mathematician, *generate or make, dynamo or electric generator, kerosene or fuel, irrigation or sprinkling, and maize or corn.* The idioms recommended are *It took so long or it took a lot of time* and *burned our eyes or hurt our eyes.*

A foundational strategy, especially for a newcomer to connect text and content, involves the infographic use of visuals. There are several strategies for this. A visual strategy that is very engaging and effective is the use of videos for images that even the newcomer can connect for providing background knowledge. Pair this with your anecdotal information as cited below to address the interpersonal intelligence.

The next strategy is adaptation of texts into an organizer that I have adapted from C.A.L. Institute's S.I.O.P. program. I use a PowerPoint slide with three boxes. I divide the slide into two halves. I have a large box on the right side of the slide for entering an adapted text for my level's one to two speakers. I have two boxes on the left side. On the top is a box labelled *Words I Don't Know*, and below it a box with *Words to Know* for text vocabulary and *Idioms* for explaining expressions in the text.

The strategy to support social studies concept knowledge is to provide a short background of the issues for each story and visual shorts are popular. The National Park Service provides a two-part video that dramatizes this for the students for the visual intelligences of all children at <http://www.nps.gov/trte/photosmultimedia/dvd.htm> . It is also available on DVD for free to support general curricula. This is part of the standard social studies curriculum in our state. For Iqbal, talk about the *conditions* of forced child labor in carpet factories for the children of poor families forced to pay for debts through their wages. Talk about the employers taking them because children's hands are smaller and could do the fine work better than adults, as well as the *economics* of employing children over adults. A video found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0D6K18wq8A> demonstrates the moral courage of these children. For *Red Scarf Girl*, talk about the *opinions* of the Chinese leader Chairman Mao and the forced indoctrination and essentially the *conditions* witch hunts of former property owners. This is also part of the standard curriculum of our state. For visuals use this website through Columbia University at <http://www.morningsun.org/smash/image/struggle.swf>. For *Time of the Butterflies* talk about the forced roundups of people who disagreed with Dominican leader Rafael Trujillo, the dictator. An AARP video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYDBjz-DZrw> is a very touching portrayal of the Mirabal sisters' plight by their surviving sister. The author of *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* produced a video about his story himself and is found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arD374MFk4w> . Talk about the oppressive *conditions* of poverty. Compare the stories using social studies vocabulary. Use icons on the board for concepts for newcomers. They will follow it eagerly since these issues

are powerful. Talk about how they all make a pattern of oppression by a group of powerful people over people who have little or no power. Contrast it with the hopeful message of our African engineer story.

Use the posters for constant reference and reinforcement. Create *Text, Theme, Content* vocabulary posters as well as series of *Academic Posters* clipped to a clothesline strategically strung across the room in groups affixed by clothespin. They are created with grouped information according to the following criteria. The first academic poster set has the knowledge level discussion and writing constructs. It should be labelled *Knowledge*. It has *Define* and *What is...* on the first line with *Describe what happened* on the second line. The third line has *first, then, next* and *finally*. The second poster has the understanding level discussion constructs and should be labelled *Understanding*. It is divided into two sections in an above and below diagram. A small two column T-chart is at the top. The left column will be labelled *compare* and the right column is labelled *contrast*. Under the *compare* label write the word *like*. Under the *contrast* label write the words *on the other hand*. Below these classifications, write the sentence starter *Can you distinguish between ... and .....*. A third poster for sentence starters is labelled *Thinking Questions*. They are tiered in the order indicated: *What was the main idea?*, *Can you distinguish between...and ...*, *Can you group characteristics such ...? What would happen if...* and *How would you feel if...?* For a thought shaping, text-to-self close reading experience. Having the posters readily available is extremely helpful and provides a reflective connection opportunity as well as another example that language is never learned in isolation. Share these constructs with your teams at your school for further reinforcement in their content areas. At any point students may ask for their *Trail* partners input to get help with orthographic issues or editing. Students may discuss pronunciation questions with their *Butterfly* partners.

### *Student Needs: Questioning Strategy*

This is the questioning strategy each story follows. Put it on a PowerPoint slide.

#### Tier One: Knowledge Level

1. Say We will DEFINE each of the words.
2. Ask WHAT is this word?
3. Then say DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED using these words and a sequence graphic organizer
  - a. FIRST, cite relevant text and read it.
  - b. THEN, cite relevant text and read it.
  - c. NEXT, cite relevant text and read it.
  - d. FINALLY, cite relevant text and read it.

## Tier Two: Understanding Level

1. Say: We will *compare* our character and ourselves with the word *like*. How are you *like* the character? Is this character happy or sad? Express it with I am *like* the character because I like this or I don't like this.
2. Say: We will *contrast* our character and ourselves with the words on the other hand. Who is *different from* the character? Tell me I am *different from* the character. *On the other hand*, \_\_\_\_ is different from the character because \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Summarize predicated on *Can you provide an example of the problem in the text?* Have them show how it is different or the same as a character from another story they might know for extension. Knowledge of what other classes are doing will be helpful. Can you provide an example of this problem from social studies? E.g.: *Describe what happened in China at this time when discussing Red Scarf Girl* integrating knowledge and understanding levels. This will depend on your states curriculum as to when different social periods are taught.

## Tier Three: Extension to Higher Level Thinking

1. Start with *What was the main idea?* and reference the vocabulary bracket graphic organizers. Repeat the words and elicit answers. Have them refer back to their Cornell Notes.
2. Next ask *What would you do?*
3. Then ask *How would you feel if this happened to you?*
4. Ask *Can you distinguish between your situation and the character's problem?* Is your situation better or worse than the character?
5. Recall the characteristics of a hero. Can you look at the text and group the events and the characteristics that make a hero such as *courage? Did this event need courage? endurance? intelligence? discretion? compassion?* How? This language will be the integrating expression of all they have learned to date.

The next strategy is employment of games through a brain based blending of language patterns connecting activities and tasks that move to full knowledge integration. See the *Classroom Activities* section.

### *Student Needs: Writing Strategies*

There are several writing strategies for this unit. We use a five-paragraph graphic organizer in a formulaic strategy. The sentences are within each section of the graphic organizer with a checklist of criteria. The teacher should provide examples of modelled writing to demonstrate expectations and conference to brainstorm word choices. They generally will choose to write their own material. Be sure to assist on topic sentences since these are particularly troublesome. Below is the strategy I propose for newcomers. More advanced students will develop their own material. Let them refer back to their Cornell Notes.

The introductory paragraph starts with *This is about \_\_\_\_\_* and recalls the language vocabulary in sentences with the following constructions. *The characters in \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_. The characters in \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_. The theme in both books is \_\_\_\_\_. Both stories are like each other because \_\_\_\_\_. They are different from each other because \_\_\_\_\_. Let me explain.*

The topic sentence for the second paragraph should read *I would describe the characters as both having \_\_\_\_\_*. The student references the first book in the following sentence. *\_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_*. *If this would happen to me, I would feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_*. Here the student will cite a text example. The student cites the second text in the following sentence is *\_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_*. *If this would happen to me, I would feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_*.

The topic sentence for the third paragraph should read *The setting and time for \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_*. *The setting and time for \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_*. The next sentence is *The times in the country in \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_*. Here they talk about the conditions at the time in the story setting. *The times in the country in \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_*. *I think this is because \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_*. Help them to recall the social studies discussions and social studies words. You will be surprised at the depth of some of the observations.

The topic sentence for the fourth paragraph is opinion. *My favorite character and problem is \_\_\_\_\_*. *This is because \_\_\_\_\_* and let them name three reasons.

Start the concluding paragraph with *In conclusion, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were my favorite stories. My most favorite was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_*. *What would happen if this happened again? I predict \_\_\_\_\_*.

Then allow the students to type this in word processing application.

### *Assessment Strategies*

For all classifications of vocabulary, use the *Quizlet* assessment feature. For completion of all activities, create your own checklist for the content, theme, academic and text vocabularies and record their performance on their portfolio. Use a Cornell Notes rubric for assessing the Cornell Notes quality. Create a rubric in *Rubistar.4teachers.org* for assessing the power writing product. For the unit exam, create it in Google Docs using the Google Forms feature. After signing into mail, choose the nine -square grid pattern icon and then the *Drive* feature. Choose *New, New File, More, Google Forms* and begin typing. Google saves your work automatically. Use an excel spreadsheet which will do the grading for you. Read the tutorial for directions. Google Docs has a *View Responses* feature which collects the submissions into a spreadsheet with your

student responses. You can upload this into a Microsoft Excel Sheet for analysis. *Google Docs* will also provide you a line item analysis of what the students answered for your reflection under *Responses, Summary of Responses*. This is on the main menu line of the document creation screen at the top of your document you are using.

For the power product there are two assessments, a checklist for the students and writing rubric for the teacher. Create your own rubric according to the criteria below at *Rubistar.4teachers.org*.

Structure the checklist in this manner:

- I have used 8 vocabulary words
- I have used 2 theme words
- I have used 2 social studies words
- I have used 2 language arts words.
- I have used the compare word *like*.
- I have used the contrast words *on the other hand*.
- I have checked my punctuation.
- I have used a form of *have* at least 3 different places.
- I have checked my subject verb agreement.
- I have compared and contrasted 2 stories.
- I have written about two characters and compared them.
- I have picked a favorite story and explained why.
- I have 2 examples from the stories.
- I have checked my spelling.
- I have complete explanations of my opinion.

### **Classroom Activities**

The sequence of instruction is very Montessori like. Each story follows the same structure.

Warm up material to every *Quizlet* activity set is classification of the vocabulary into PEAK's *Alphabet Boxes*<sup>15</sup>, a gentle guide into classification with new words or a word search to vary. Assess for percentage of word completed. You can create a word search at the following Discovery Education address:

[http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp?campaign=flyout\\_teachers\\_puzzle\\_wordcross](http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp?campaign=flyout_teachers_puzzle_wordcross) . Assess on the same basis.

*Quizlet* is the initial activity for processing all vocabulary. Research indicates a 28/3 learn curve, which means to master one concept, the average learner needs twenty-eight interactions over a period of three weeks in a variety of modalities in order to master the concepts<sup>16</sup>. One class period is not enough to master this set of vocabulary in the recursive web in which the student needs to find patterns and create structures for extending and connecting their set to build survival skills across all curricula. How can

we do that? A highly recommended real-time orthographic correction application called *Quizlet* at [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) meets that need. This allows the student to advance at his or her own pace. *Quizlet* has five activities and a test that can be modified to meet your student's learning styles. It offers dictation features and real time correction for strong mastery.

*Table Races* is next, with a response sheet made from a two column table titled *Text Sentence* and *My Sentence*. Have the students interact with the words. Let them find the sentences using the vocabulary from their text and copy them onto a piece of paper. Then produce their own sentences with the vocabulary word just next to the author's version. Stand at the front of the room and have samples at *Rescue Stations* of possible uses. Distribute a limited set of *Muddy Paws*<sup>17</sup> with dog prints printed on a piece of paper for passes to *Rescue Stations*. Let them run back and forth between you and their desks to check their creations with you. Interface with them through whiteboards and dry erase markers. This is perfect for interpersonal intelligences. Assess on the basis of work percentage completed in the response sheet.

The culminating is a PEAK game called *Classified Learning*, which assigns rules for determining meaning of words. Group according to *Model Partners* to compensate for the more challenged partner. The exercise of evaluation and elimination is a new skill that is well worth planting. The rules for thematic vocabulary will be life experience or values example oriented because of nature of the words' meanings to different societies and will be decided on as a class. Use IF...THEN...ELSE structures as examples for higher level speakers and logic development. The objective of this game is to classify concepts for correlation analysis of vocabulary to text. The materials needed for this are a response sheet for logging responses and a pencil as well as a *Rescue Station* and *Muddy Paws*.

This response sheet is a simple table with four columns. The first column is labelled *Vocabulary Word*, the second column is labelled *Rule*; the third column is labelled *Type* and subcategories are labelled *Positive* and *Negative* for the split column underneath for recording the criteria assessment by the student. They write a plus (+) for a word they think is positive and a minus (-) for a word they think is negative. The fourth column, labelled *My Sentence*, permits the students to write a sentence with, even as elementary as an association with a synonym, i.e., a word means synonym correlation sentence integrate the student's language experience which expresses the rule, capitalizing on both halves of the fishbone structure and prior instruction. Encourage higher level writing with the prompt *I am brave when I .....in the Sentence* column.

The activity to task game sequence is as follows. Thematic vocabulary for this unit is *hero* or *superman* as opposed to *idol* or *star*, *ideal* or *model*, *courage* or *bravery*, *endurance* or *strength*, *intelligence* or *wisdom*, *discretion* or *caution*, and *compassion* or *kindness*. The teacher guides the rules empowering the students to make decisions based on models, differentiating for more accomplished speakers alternating IF THEN ELSE scenarios for engagement. For the determination of what constitutes each of the

hero characteristics, model everyday scenarios. For *courage*, ask *Is it brave to help a child who is being hurt by a bully?* Guide the rule's shaping this example: Rule: Courage is being strong for people. For *endurance*, ask *Is it endurance to keep working to learn a new language?* Guide the rule's shaping around this example: Rule: Endurance is being strong for learning. For *intelligence*, ask *Is it intelligence to know something?* Guide the rule's shaping around this example: Rule: Intelligence is being strong for knowledge. For *compassion*, ask *Is it kindness to help someone in trouble?* Elicit answers. Guide the rule's shaping through a sample prompt, i.e., *Compassion is being strong for people who need help.* Leave discretion for last as it can be used as a wrap up item. For *discretion*, ask *Is it discretion to be careful what one says?* Guide the rule's shaping around this: Rule: Discretion is being strong for survival. Here consider the meaning of the American aphorism *Losing a battle to win a war.* Explain the power of non-violence and support this with historical examples of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. for sprinkled extension to the civil rights theme. Use the vocabulary posters as supports. A completed response sheet is the product for assessment according to your criteria. Mine is one point for each item completed.

*Shadow Reading* is the next activity after every text vocabulary set is mastered. Introduce the story through the S.I.O.P. graphic organizer with the adapted text for close reading. Throw up the adapted organizer PowerPoint in an infographic presentation for those needing that visual support in addition to marking on their own copy. Second, allow the students to peruse the text independently, marking words they don't know and entering it in the adapted organizer and noting the vocabulary cited for text comprehension. In the third step, model pronunciation and mood through a dramatic reading. Fourth, the student begins by repeating each word that the teacher reads. Note any phonetic snags and right them. I have a set of phonetic classifications in posters along my wall with common spellings under the sounds for constant visual support of reading. Students have their own copy of the text infographic and may be making notations on them as the learning team processes the ordered manuscript wherever needed. Seat the students strategically for an implicit correction schedule by seating language strengths alternatively for the final round of Shadow Reading before release to a peer team stratagem. This works like *Popcorn Reading*, only the seating arrangement, invisible to the users, will act as an implicit corrector through modeling of stronger text mastery before moving to a more challenged student, making it a more viable information handling activity. Royalty free games are available at [http://people.uncw.edu/ertzbergerj/ppt\\_games](http://people.uncw.edu/ertzbergerj/ppt_games) for your review information using the questioning script strategy.

### *StudySync Activities*

StudySync offers virtual annotations as a close reading strategy. Foundational knowledge is already laid at this point adapted texts. Higher level students can go straight to it having read and felt successful with the easier text to the more expanded version with confidence. This is also a differentiation strategy for a mixed ability classroom. Model annotation for the students. Select an area of text and right click your mouse with the right mouse button. A popup menu will appear close by the text.

Choose the Add Note feature to add information to sections. You can apply the *Wh* strategy in an *I've Got Who's Got* game as you work through texts with the same partners. The teacher can sign in and evaluate student understanding through this. Writing prompts are also provided. I prefer to make my own and McGraw-Hill supports this. This can be done under the *Prompts* feature as the program administrator for your class.

### *Cornell Notes Dictation with I have Who has*

This is a collaborative pattern searching and production task and lasts two class periods with independent work. Students take the *Card Trick Wh* notes and *Karachi* partners dictate them to their dictation partner *who*, *what* and *when* components of the Cornell Note graphic organizer. It builds and sustains a web of connections to central themes. You can download the Cornell Notes template from my website at [centrallyesl.weebly.com](http://centrallyesl.weebly.com). The *Scarf* partners will dictate *where*, *why* and *how*. *Butterfly* partners correct any incorrect speech they hear and the students will rotate to their *Scarf* partners after dictation to the *Karachi* partner. The *Wind* partner checks for dictation errors. This rotation works according to the intensity of instruction up to this point for the affective filter. The two partners dictate their assigned components and rotate. They summarize independently using the summary signal word of *In conclusion* in the summary section of the Cornell Note graphic organizer. Going to their task partners and rotation substitutes and facilitates classroom management. They rotate at the sound of a gong or the play of a byte of music. My preference is always Mozart.

A game that I have used successfully for summary is PEAK's *Search and Rescue with Model Partners*. Create a *Wh*'s essential information set for the students to practice for each story for print awareness through *Quizlet* and testing through *Search and Rescue* for print awareness. Support the student with a response sheet that has six columns labelled with *Wh* categories and two rows specific, one for the *Wh* label and one to receive the information.

The execution of the game is as follows. The basic idea is a search for information through patterns. PowerPoint is a phenomenal tool for creating slides to serve as stations. Have two boxes on each slide, one on top of the other. The composition for each slide is your *Wh* information following this logic. *Slide One*: Box 1:*Who* Box 2:*How* Information *Slide Two*: Box 1:*What* Box 2:*Why* Information *Slide Three*: Box 1:*When* Box 2: *Where* Information *Slide Four*: Box 1:*Where* Box 2: *When* Information *Slide Five*: Box 1:*Why* Box 2:*What* Information *Slide Six*: Box 1:*How* Box 2:*Who* Information.

Have a movement schedule for the students, a *Rescue Station* and *Muddy Paws* tickets for cashing in to gauge confusion levels at the rescue station. Possible outlets are a computer with all the correct answers for the interactive intelligence with whiteboards and dry erase markers for additional practice, used as a static referent. Have one student seated at a desk and have another student with a whiteboard and a dry erase marker returning information to the second partner for dictation. This can be a *Karachi*

and a *Scarf* partner rotation. Explain your movement schedule. I like to differentiate stations with color for them to follow. Explain that they have to fill in the response sheet by guessing which information byte matches the correct *Wh* category. They look at the answers at their assigned station and filling in their response sheet by matching the information in the second box with the corresponding *Wh* on the response sheet. Assess the completed *Response Sheet*.

### *Writing Activity*

Keep in mind the different world writing traditions and the cultural conflict we have in our expectations. A recent article from the Writing Center at Purdue summed it up best about the differences in rhetorical patterns. “Sometimes, differences in logic, topic development, or argumentation can make the paper written by a non-native speaker of English look flawed to an American reader.”<sup>18</sup> Therefore we need a tool that shows the students where to put what. For example, other cultures do not necessarily use paragraphs as we do in the U.S., and this is especially for students from Asian countries where the vertical nature of expression is dominant. I generally use the bus as a metaphor for the perfect paragraph and write in buses as an entertaining graphic as a way of making my point. Use the formulaic suggestions in the *Writing Strategies* section and conference at every point possible. They are building and integrating language for expression. Support this with a formulaic approach and provide language prompts inside a graphic organizer with instruction on writing and models for sparking language experimentation. Sprinkle the *have* tagmemes examples in the models. Keep up a poster if necessary of its constructs.

Prepare the students for the activity by showing them the writing flowchart first and the labels. Tell them what we call the parts of writing and show them where they are. Explain the functions of a *hook*, *introductory paragraph*, *topic sentence*, *supporting detail*, *body text*, and *concluding paragraph*. Provide them with the corresponding template with formulaic text as indicated in the *Writing Strategies* section. Have modelled writing samples of your expectations for whatever grade students are attempting to achieve. If the reader requires an example, go to my website at [centrallyesl.weebly.com](http://centrallyesl.weebly.com) under the tab labelled *Didactic*. Look for the *Felix Sabates, Jr.* project with modelled writing as well. There are two samples to model two different levels of writing, one for newcomers and one for 2-3 levels. The paragraphs are different colors to emphasize the structure of the paragraph.

Conference with students in your classroom to check for errors and redirect them as needed. Advocate for them by providing laptops and class time to work on their product. I have laptops for each child through a grant. Write one if your district doesn't provide it. Technology is especially beneficial for students with organization issues, little support outside the school setting for academic endeavors, don't have one at home or are simply the kind of child that is addicted to them. Advocate for your student with your choice of rubric created at [Rubistar.4teachers.org](http://Rubistar.4teachers.org).

Put the template on the school 'cloud' and download to each student directory for their production as an activity.

The final activity is the unit test which you will create in Google Docs as a Google Form.

## **Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards**

This unit incorporates Common Core standards for Language Arts and Social Studies as well as the WiDA Social and Instructional Language Goals. Using Reading R.18. It supports the student through in heuristic process scaffolded with signal words to determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, Literacy CCRAW.4. demonstrates relationships to supporting ideas, provide an objective summary of the text. The focus is to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience. In L1 it demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing as well as well as L6's focus on the use of accurate grade-appropriate general academic word according to Bloom's Taxonomy. To support the National WiDA standards, the English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes in the school setting. They also learn to communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts. Finally they learn to communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies.

### **Materials for Classroom**

*Microsoft Office Professional Suite* by Microsoft Corporation for creating PowerPoint slides and *Word* for producing the written product.

Laptop or desk computer for student activities

LCD Projector or overhead projector with self-published transparencies for infographic dissemination.

Internet Services for links to online resources.

*StudySync* for higher level texts

Poster Paper for posters

Clothesline to hang the posters.

Clothespins to affix the posters for static reference

Whiteboards for conferences with teacher for error clarification.

Dry Eraser Markers for use with whiteboards.

Copier and notebook paper for personal copies to support students with challenges and text copies for adapted texts

Colored Markers for annotations.

### **Reading List for Students**

Soft Rain: A Story of the Cherokee Trail of Tears by Cornelia Cornelissen, pages 28-31; This is the story of a young girl who is forced to take part in the march west of the Cherokee people from North Carolina to Oklahoma after the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830. It is a story of struggle and sadness. *Lexile: 650L*

Iqbal: A Novel by Francesco D'Adamo, pages 18-21; This is the story of the moral fortitude of a 13 year old boy cut down in his prime, willing to make the ultimate

sacrifice to be the champion of voiceless victim of forced child labor with Abraham Lincoln as his model. *Lexile: 730-1060L*

Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang pages 223-227; This is story of a young girl who resisted the temptation of an adolescent's dream and is inspirational in her devotion to her family in times of trouble. *Lexile: 740- 780L*

In the Time of the Butterflies by Julia Alvarez pages 8-9 for review. This story chronicles the endurance of a family in trouble times and how they maintain normalcy in the worst of times under one of Latin America's cruelest dictators, Rafael Trujillo. *Lexile: 910L*

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer pages 153-155; This is one of the greatest stories of triumph you will read for ingenuity and pluck solving a national need. *Lexile: 960-970L*

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