



To Kill a Mockingbird: Taking A Stand and Letting Your Character Define You

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Eighth Grade Language Arts, all levels

Keywords: Fiction, close reading, argumentative writing, claim, counterclaim, traditional text, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus, evidence based claim, writing, Ain't I A Woman, Sojourner Truth, Equal Rights for Women, Shirley Chisolm, Scottsboro Boys, taking a stand.

Teaching Standards: [Appendix 1: Implementing teaching standards.](#)

Synopsis: For this unit, students will be learning how to gather evidence to support a claim and defend that claim in an argumentative essay. While reading the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, students will meet Atticus Finch, the quintessential doomed hero of the story. As the novel progresses, students will be formulating their opinions on Atticus and the situation that unfolds with Tom Robinson and his court case. They will be completing various Quick Write homework assignments so that they can begin practicing their writing skills, as well as constructing graphic organizers to keep their thoughts and evidence together before writing their rough draft.

The culminating assessment will be an argumentative essay where they have to “take a stand” and defend their decision to either defend Atticus as a model human being, or criticize him as a weak defense lawyer.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 105 students in eighth grade standard, honors, and inclusion Language Arts.

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Rationale

Students go through middle school with very little guidance on how to write properly or even format a formal essay because “it’s not on the test”. Because our educational system has placed such a high importance on test scores for both students and teachers, writing has diminished in the classroom. This not only is detrimental to the success of students later on in life, but this impedes English teachers from teaching valuable life skills earlier on so that they can be perfected over time. Having previously taught high school, I have seen incoming freshman trained to take tests but with very little writing skills. Even though they were not expected to have those skills in middle school, they are now somehow expected to know how to do it perfectly in high school. This not only affects their grades but will then affect their performance in college, which requires even more writing. In order to prevent this possible outcome, I believe that by scaffolding the writing requirements throughout the year, my eighth grade scholars will be entering their ninth grade year with the background and confidence to move forward into an intensive writing environment. The essay writing skills that I will be focusing on will be an argumentative essay pertaining to the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, as well as various speeches such as “Ain’t I A Woman” and “Equal Rights for Women” which all encompass the theme of “taking a stand”.

School Setting/Demographics/Background Information

I teach eighth grade Language Arts at Ranson IB Middle School in Charlotte, NC. It is part of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District which is comprised of 39 middle schools. Ranson is located in the Northlake area of Charlotte and is a title one school. We have a population of about 935 students in grades 6-8, a total of 329 students in 8th grade alone. Our population includes about 5 percent of 8th graders that are academically gifted, 69 percent that are black (non-Hispanic), 22 percent Hispanic, 7 percent with limited English proficiency, 5 percent that are white (non-Hispanic). The challenge lies more with about 64 percent of our students who are classified as economically disadvantaged.

This year I have the challenge of teaching three different levels of ELA. My first block of the day is an inclusion block, where I receive assistance from an EC teacher every other day for the 12 EC scholars that we have. My second block of the day is a standard ELA block with a varying range of abilities and my third block is essentially an honors level block as they are all also taking Math 1. Upon checking all of my scholars EOG scores from last year upon entering eighth grade, about 50 of my scholars received scores of 1 or 2 on their EOG (64% or lower), about 16 received a level 3 (65%-70%), and 24 received a 4 or 5 (71% or higher).

Content Background

My 8th grade cohort uses lessons from the Engage NY curriculum entitled Expeditionary Learning¹. We began using this curriculum last year and had some major successes as well as major fails. Even though there is no writing component on the EOG, we agreed that writing still needed to be taught and assessed to better prepare them from high school and college. The problem, however, was that we were basically teaching someone else's blue prints and tripping along the way to make sure we met the requirements that it had set. Quick Writes and essays were mediocre at best because we didn't know where to start with these students, and in some cases, we didn't entirely understand the end goal. Eventually, it seemed that we had to concentrate entirely on just having them write something so that we could improve the next module based off our assessment of the first. After learning through trial and error, we took the summer to formulate a plan to strengthen the beginning lessons so that the end result was a stronger, more polished piece of writing that could eventually be displayed.

Students entered the 8th grade having minimal writing skills in terms of spelling, grammar, and essay writing. This year we are using Canvas to house our lessons, documents, and assignments to begin integrating a consistent use of technology into every classroom. Scholars began the year reading a novel titled "Inside Out and Back Again" by Thanhha Lai². Throughout this unit, they began learning how to analyze a text and make inferences based on the information that was given by our protagonist, a 10 year old Vietnamese girl that became a refugee as the Vietnam War broke out in Saigon. Students worked with a graphic organizer for their text evidence and inferences that they made about who Ha was as a person and how she changed as person throughout the story due to the many challenges that she faced, thus developing characterization skills. After compiling that information, the students were given various writing prompts for homework in the form of "Quick Writes" to elaborate on this information in paragraph form. They also read various informational texts that connected to the book to develop their understanding of the "universal refugee experience". As we reached the end of the novel, I helped them learn what a "claim" was and helped them formulate a claim which they had to prove for an analytical essay. Their prompt was, "How does the phrase 'inside out' relate to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home? Analyze how the meaning of the novel's title, Inside Out & Back Again, relates to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home and how this experience is revealed in Ha's story"³.

This assignment was heavily scaffolded with graphic organizers that had sentence starters, and the essay was extremely broken down so that students basically had to plug in the evidence from their charts and then turn that into essay form. A rubric was

provided so they would become accustomed to checking their final draft to make sure all requirements were met⁴.

Moving into this target module, I had set forth the following goals:

- Create a framework for writing an essay by reviewing basic writing conventions and MLA formatting.
- Make sure students have become proficient on necessary essay writing skills so that upon entering the second module they already having learned how to structure an essay (topic sentences, introducing and stating text evidence, elaborating on that evidence, etc), how to state a claim, and how to cite the text using in-text citations.

The “Taking A Stand” module develops students’ abilities to make evidence-based claims through activities based on a close reading of three texts and a mid-unit assessment. We will be looking at *Ain’t I a Woman?* by Sojourner Truth, *Equal Rights for Women*, by Shirley Chisholm, and Lyndon Johnson’s “The Great Society” speech. This addresses NYS CCLS RI.8.2, RI.8.5, and RI.8.6. The main novel that these texts will support is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee because they all encompass someone taking a stand for something they believe in. The novel will help us build on that theme as well as discuss how the person you are dictates what side you will choose to stand on.

The Guiding Questions for the Module are:

- How does taking a stand in small ways show integrity?
- Is it worth taking a stand for one’s self? For others?
- What do we know that Scout doesn’t?
- How does the idea of taking a stand connect to the dramatic irony and Scout’s perspective?

Teaching Strategies (See Appendix B for Handouts)

- Gallery Walk (Various lessons)
- Clock Buddies/Discussion Appointment Partners
- Jigsaw Activities
- Quiz-Quiz Trade
- World Café
- Fish Bowl Seminar
- Think- Pair-Share
- Elbow partners
- Analyzing literary elements

- Peer Editing
- DEAR time writing prompts
- AIR Time Reading
- Write-Pair-Share, Write-Share-Revise
- Quick Writes
- End of Unit Assessments

Students have all of their handouts and documents in their Canvas classroom, or within their three-ring binder if modifications are required or computer access isn't available. Both of these ways allow students to stay extremely organized and have their documents readily available. All writing work done in class is through Canvas and allows them to always have it available after it is graded with feedback from me usually attached. This helps me as well with my EC students so that all work is documented, and so it is always available for the EC department to check to make sure the student is meeting his/her requirements in case further intervention or retention is needed.

Materials students will need in order to be successful in this unit

- Chrome book with Canvas access or a three ring binder
- *To Kill A Mockingbird* novel- each student has their own copy
- Copies/PDFs of two articles- "Ain't I A Woman", "Equal Rights for Women"
- Various graphic organizers available through Canvas
- Movie of *To Kill A Mockingbird*
- Websites pertaining to court cases

Unit Plan

Module 2 Unit 1 Lessons 1-5

Objectives

- I can cite the evidence that Shirley Chisholm uses to support her claims in "Equal Rights for Women."
- I can analyze the structure of a specific paragraph in "Equal Rights for Women," including the role of a particular sentence in developing a key concept.
- I can analyze the development of a central idea in "Equal Rights for Women."
- I can objectively summarize "Equal Rights for Women."
- I can analyze Shirley Chisholm's perspective in "Equal Rights for Women."
- I can analyze how Shirley Chisholm acknowledges and responds to conflicting viewpoints.

Teaching Strategies

Gallery Walk

I Notice/I Wonder

Read Aloud and Guided Reading

Text Dependent Questions

Discussion/Appointment Partners

Jigsaw Activity

Somebody...Wanted...But...So...Then (SWBST) Organizer

Discussion Forum on Canvas

Purpose

To begin building background knowledge on the overall theme of the unit; to read speeches from various people who have all chosen to take a stand against something they felt was wrong; to identify claim and supporting evidence; to be able to write the objective summary and central idea of each speech.

Teacher Lead Instruction and Observations

To begin this module, I gave my students an “I Notice/I Wonder” anchor chart to record predictions they made during their Gallery Walk⁵ of images of people taking a stand. After the Gallery Walk and discussion/prediction making concluded, I did a read aloud of the speech “Equal Rights for Women”, demonstrating proper annotation, gist statements, and circling challenging or important words. Afterwards, I posed comprehension questions to spark discussion before allowing them to move on to independent work. I also began our Discussion Appointment partners’ routine at the beginning of this module. This is designed to give students the opportunity to move about the classroom in an orderly manner so that they can pair up with various students throughout the lesson. This allows them to get feedback from people other than the ones they are always sitting next to. Since most of the reading is done for homework, we spend our class time doing the analysis and writing of our material. This allows students to work individually so they can read at their own pace and write their initial thoughts down before peers look at it. This partner work is done for a few minutes at the beginning of the block so that they can see what their colleagues think, revise their answers, and be confident to share out. Having worked with ELL students before, this method is extremely helpful so that everyone knows their answer is correct before asked to share. I find it also to be extremely successful in building the confidence of EC students who may need a stronger partner help them get to the answer. Since this is the second module we are doing this

year, students are comfortable with this process and are able to get through collaborating quickly and efficiently (Appendix A).

Independent Practice/Informal Assessments

- Students answer Text Dependent Questions to show that they fully comprehend and have analyzed the text,
- For homework, they will be completing an objective summary assignment using the strategy “Somebody...Wanted...But...So...Then”. They must also write the central idea of the speech. My students really like this strategy and for the most part, are able to fill in the boxes with the correct information to produce a thorough objective summary and central idea (two standards heavily assessed on the EOG).
- When they reached day five, they had completely analyzed the text and began looking at the concept of “perspective” and “counterclaim”. In a discussion forum, they answered a question that their peers could read and respond to. The question was, “What is Shirley Chisholm thinking and saying about discrimination against women? Who is her audience?”

Small Group Work

Scholars also worked in small groups to revisit the concept of identifying the claim an author makes. By using a jigsaw activity, the classroom was divided up so that each section of the room had to read a different section of the article and then teach the class about that section.

Because this is their second module, I put more emphasis on students pairing up and being able to discuss their findings with a partner. For this unit, I used a Discussion Appointment Partner⁶ strategy so that students would have a new partner for discussion every few lessons. Anyone that did not do the homework had to meet with me so I could ask him or her probing questions that would be pertinent to understand for the lesson that day.

Lessons 6-7

Objectives

- I can analyze the development of a central idea in “Ain’t I a Woman?”
- I can analyze the structure of a paragraph, including the role of particular sentences, in “Ain’t I a Woman?”
- I can analyze Sojourner Truth’s perspective in “Ain’t I a Woman?”

Teaching Strategies

Read Aloud and Guided Reading
Text Dependent Questions
Discussion/Appointment Partners
World Café

Purpose

To begin building background knowledge on the overall theme of the unit; to read speeches from various people who have all chosen to take a stand against something they felt was wrong; to identify claim and supporting evidence; to be able to write the objective summary and central idea of each speech.

Teacher Lead Instruction and Observations

As a class, we looked at one more speech titled “Ain’t I A Woman” by Sojourner Truth. I like to show them a video clip of a woman giving a reenactment of this speech so that they can hear someone else’s voice⁷. After hearing it, we discussed initial observations. I explained to them that they have already read a text where they’ve identified the objective summary, central idea, analyzed the text structure, the perspective of the speaker, and identified her claim and counterclaim so now they had to try to do it on their own.

Small Group Work

Students use this speech and work to collaborate in a World Café activity.

Activity

- Students were in groups of five where one person is designated the leader to keep the group on task.
- They were given a question that they first have to independently think about and write down their answer, and then discuss it with their group.
- When told to switch, everyone but the leader moves to the next group.
- The leader was then responsible for sharing what the original group had discussed and newcomers are responsible for recording his/her response.
- Next, a new group leader was chosen, a new question is presented, and the process continues for 2 more rounds (3 rounds total).
- When they were finished, they return to their seat to summarize their findings and reflect on how the activity went.

Lessons 8-11: Part 1 of *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Objectives

- I can use the strongest evidence from *To Kill a Mockingbird* in my understanding of the first part of Chapter 1.
- I can support my inferences about Chapter 1 of *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can participate in discussions about the text with a partner, small group, and the whole class.
- I can analyze the impact of allusions to world events in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- I can analyze how what other characters say about Atticus reveals his character.
- I can analyze how Atticus' words and actions reveal his character.
- I can identify the strongest evidence in Chapter 2 that shows why characters take a stand.
- I can analyze the narrative structure of Chapter 2 of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- I can objectively summarize Chapter 2 of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Teaching Strategies

Story Impressions Note Catcher
Structured Notes Homework Packet
Vocabulary and context clues model
Atticus Anchor Chart
Somebody...Wanted...But...So...Then (SWBST) Organizer
Text Dependent Questions
Taking A Stand Anchor Chart

Purpose

To begin reading TKAM and understand the exposition of the story; to discuss what type of character traits a person might have in order to stand up for something he/she believes in; to synthesize the common theme of the module to the previous articles and the beginning of the story.

Teacher Lead Instruction and Observations

The novel launched with a highly scaffolded reading of the first chapter and building several strong reading routines (including taking structured notes and identifying key vocabulary). I read aloud pages 1-6 in Chapter 1 and then we discussed the exposition of the story, pausing for comprehension at key points, especially FDR's famous line "the only thing to fear is fear itself"⁸. Here, I discussed with them what an "allusion" is as it's a great literary element that can also pop up on the EOG and something for them to keep in mind as we read the rest of the story. I also modeled the structured notes homework that they will be doing for the entire module. By the end of this first section, we read chapters 2 and 3 together as well.

Independent Instruction/Informal Assessment

Students completed the Story Impressions Note Catcher and began the Atticus Anchor Chart to begin organizing their thoughts on what will happen in the story, and how to describe the protagonist of the story. They also completed their first SWBST objective summary of each chapter so that they can reference back to it if they are looking for specific evidence later on. Students also analyzed how characters like Scout and Jem are taking stands in subtle ways at the beginning of the story. To complete their comprehension of these first few chapters, they submitted their answers to Text Dependent Questions via Canvas.

Lessons 12-14: Part 1 of *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Objectives

- I can support my inferences about Chapter 3 of *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can evaluate the similarities and differences between the novel and the film version of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- I can analyze how the author draws on the theme of the Golden Rule in Chapter 3 and 4.
- I can summarize and support my inferences about Chapter 4 of *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can use context clues to determine the meaning of phrases in Chapter 4.
- I can deepen my understanding of key words by engaging in Quiz-Quiz-Trade.
- I can support my inferences about Chapter 5 with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can determine the figurative meanings of words and phrases as they are used in Chapter 5 of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Teaching Strategies

Gallery Walk
Think-Write-Pair-Share
Text to Film Notecatcher
TED Talk
Boo Radley Networking Sessions (3 Questions)
Quiz-Quiz-Trade
Chalk Talk Text Dependent Questions
Compare/Contrast Text Structure

Purpose

To begin reading TKAM and understand the exposition of the story; to discuss what type of character traits a person might have in order to stand up for something he/she believes in; to determine how the theme of the module relates to the previous articles and the beginning of the story; to relate the concept of taking a stand to the Golden Rule.

Teacher Lead Instruction and Observations

I led students through another Gallery Walk⁹, except this time they were looking at different quotes instead of images. This challenges them to make inferences and paraphrase the quotes they were reading so they can synthesize these ideas with what we've been talking about. Eventually they see that all of these quotes have the idea of the Golden Rule in common (Appendix A).

Independent Instruction/Informal Assessment

Think-Write-Pair-Share again challenges students to think before they speak, formulate their thoughts on paper, pair up with a neighbor to share their information, and then share out confidently in multiple discussion forums and web posts. Inferring who Atticus is at this point in the novel is so important to our end goal of analyzing how he's stayed consistent throughout the whole novel. Students are required to answer Text Dependent Questions and complete a Chalk Talk to discuss who Atticus is and how he follows the Golden Rule.

Small Group

They also have the opportunity to watch the film version of the novel and make some comparisons. Students really enjoy seeing the movie after we've been reading the novel for so long. They really enjoy seeing what Scout looks like and hearing her voice, especially when watching the scene between her and Walter Cunningham at the dining

room table. Here, students pair up to discuss what it means when Atticus says “walk in someone else’s skin” and then record their answer¹⁰.

Lessons 15-19: Part 1 of *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Objectives

- I can compare and contrast the structure of Chapter 6 and “Those Winter Sundays.”
- I can analyze how the structures of Chapter 6 and “Those Winter Sundays” affect meaning.
- I can analyze how the structure of “Incident” helps create meaning.
- I can infer how Scout’s perspective about Boo Radley changes from Chapter 1 to Chapter 8 based on events in these chapters.
- I can compare and contrast the structure of Chapter 8 and “Incident.”
- I can analyze how the structures of Chapter 8 and “Incident” affect meaning.
- I can support my inferences about Chapter 10 of *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can analyze how the author draws on the theme of the Golden Rule in the novel.
- I can analyze how the author uses the allusion to the Golden Rule in a new way.
- I can compare and contrast how two texts, a poem, and a scene from the novel have different structures which contribute to meaning and style.
- I can analyze the figurative language in an excerpt from Chapter 18.

Teaching Strategies

Jigsaw Activity

Taking A Stand Anchor Chart

World Café

Atticus Anchor Chart

Film Adaptation

End of Unit Assessment

Purpose

To compare and contrast how the novel and poem have different text structures but similar themes; analyze figurative language throughout various chapters; synthesize themes between novel, film, and poems.

Teaching Instruction and Guided Practice

At this point of the year we have not analyzed much poetry. The poems “Those Winter Sundays” and “Incident” are very closely tie to the concept of “The Golden Rule” and students have to do a close read and analysis of each poem to make that connection. When we reach this part, we will read the poem together and for the first one, I will walk them through appropriate gist statements, challenging words, and the central idea.

Independent Instruction/Informal Assessment

Students will be responsible for maintaining their SWBST objective summaries as we continue reading through more chapters. They also have to go back to the Taking A Stand anchor chart to record new information as well as the Atticus Anchor Chart.

Small Group

Jigsaw Activity to discuss Scout’s perspective of Book Radley from Chapters 1, 4, 6 and 7, and 8¹¹. Students are responsible for sharing out their groups findings and recording what the other groups tell them about theirs. I love this strategy because it allows students to be the teacher and take the foreground of the classroom. Students are required to track the speaker while he/she is talking and giving the information and then record the information that is shared with them in their designated area on their graphic organizer. It makes students understand the importance of providing someone who has not read what he/she has as much information as possible so that the audience understands what he/she is talking about.

Formal Assessment

In the end of unit assessment, students will demonstrate their understanding of the Golden Rule theme, allusions to other texts, and how text structure develops meaning.

Module 2 Unit 2 Lessons 1-8: Part 2 of *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Objectives

- I can support my inferences about Ch 11-13 with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can analyze what other characters’ dialogue about Atticus reveals about his character; I can analyze how Atticus’s words and actions reveal his character.
- I can analyze how the themes of the Golden Rule and taking a stand are developed in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- I can objectively summarize Chapter 18 in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- I can analyze how the reader’s perspective is different from Scout’s in a key scene in Chapter 19 and how this affects the reader.

- I can analyze how Atticus’s questions reveal aspects of his character.
- I can understand the literal and figurative meaning of Atticus’s language in his closing speech.
- I can analyze the impact word choice has on meaning and tone as Atticus and Mr. Gilmer cross-examine witnesses.
- I can share my ideas and build on other’s ideas during Fishbowl.
- I can analyze how Atticus’s closing speech relates to the themes of taking a stand and the Golden Rule.
- I can support my inferences about Chapters 22 and 23 of *To Kill a Mockingbird* with the strongest evidence from the text.
- I can analyze how taking a stand is developed in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Teaching Strategies

Jigsaw Activity

Analyzing Scout and the Reader’s Perspective Notecatcher

Taking A Stand Anchor Chart

Discussion Appointment Partners

Atticus and Mr. Gilmer Comparison- Fishbowl Activity

Written Conversation

Four Corners

Purpose

To further synthesize the overall theme of the module with the events in the story; to analyze how specific word choice and figurative language dictates Atticus’s character; to compare and contrast viewpoints on the closing argument of the trial.

Teacher Lead Instruction and Observations

Upon completing the novel, they will continue to reflect on the reading by answering focus questions that attend to the theme of taking a stand, while also studying other important aspects of the novel involving character analysis and perspective. In order to track their thinking as they read the rest of the novel, students will continue to add to their Atticus Note-catchers from Unit 1 as well as the Taking a Stand anchor chart.

Discuss what “integrity” is- display a frayer model. Where have we seen this? Who shows integrity? What are some synonyms for this word?

Independent Instruction/Informal Assessment

Analyze “After Atticus’s speech to the court in Chapter 21, how do both the jury and the black community take a stand? How is this tied to the Golden Rule? Explain”.

Close Reading of chapter 23 and then answer Text Dependent Questions, reviewing final answers with a partner.

Pick a key quote to analyze and then stand in that corner.

A fishbowl activity culminates this pivotal point in the story. In an effort to bring the 21st century into this unit, I believe that we have to “trust students to wrestle with complex choices in the past and present so that they will better understand the social mores of our time¹²”. While listening to the praise come out of each student, it is our jobs as educators to remind students there will always be someone who disagrees with them. To play devil’s advocate, I will present finds from the article “Atticus Finch: American Literatures Most Celebrated Rape Apologist” to show them a counterclaim¹³. This is when I expect things to get a little loud as students tell me why I’m wrong- and I explain to them they just proved their claim.

Small Group

Analyzing Themes Notecatcher in Lesson 3

Written Conversation of the characters and their own reactions to the decision at the end of the trial.

Formal Assessment

Mid-Unit Assessment

Note: This is where we paused before the next designated lesson and discussed who Atticus Finch really was. Students are able to describe him based on character traits they know, but being able to discuss Atticus as an iconic hero was very challenging. Students tend to regurgitate information and this is a key point in the story where they really need to tie together how the type of person he is resulted in the way he presented Tom Robinson’s case. This is where I take the key traits (empathy, dignity, integrity, exemplar, and moral courage) and we identified parts of the novel that show Atticus demonstrating these traits. Next, we supported those conclusions with evidence from the text. Finally, we tied it together to the culminating courtroom scene and discussed how the type of person he is led him to doing what he did as a lawyer for Tom Robinson.

Culminating Assessment (Lessons 10-16)

For their end of unit assessment, students will write an argumentative essay in which they argue whether it makes sense or doesn’t make sense for Atticus, based on his character,

to take a stand to defend Tom Robinson. This essay encompasses everything that we have done throughout the first module and the current one. They will have to make a claim and then be able to defend that claim with evidence from the text. Based on the essays last year, every student believed that Atticus was an honest and resilient man who did his best to defend Tom Robinson because he knew it was the morally right thing to do. This year, the focus will be getting them to dig deeper as to why this was such an amazing thing for a white man to do during that time period. I am also hoping that they will bring the real world topics we talked about into their essay to tie the book to the 21st century.

When they have completed their graphic organizers and rough draft, they will spend one day peer editing other 8th grade students' rough drafts. Because we are doing this through Canvas, they will digitally share their rough drafts with students in my other blocks. The reason I want them to share their drafts with other blocks is because I want them to see what peers in other rooms are doing and how they are succeeding with the topic. My honors blocks will be working on how to edit and help the lower level blocks, while my inclusion and standard blocks will be reviewing honors level work to see how they can improve their piece of writing so that it is more than just merely answering the questions and doing the basic requirements. After the peer revising is finished, students will need to make corrections in a separate word document so that they now have a more polished piece.

Additional Element (TBD)

The pivotal court scene brings the book to a dramatic climax. Based off my students reaction last year, they not only began asking questions after they read the chapters, but after they watched the scene in the film and saw how easily it was for this town to convict a guilty man. With racial tensions high in the world at this current time, I would like to amplify the reactions of my students from last year and put on a moot court dealing with real cases that involved people taking a stand for something they believe in. Several friends I have that work in various areas of the law and other fields will be coming in to stage a moot court. Members of the classroom will consist of the different people that make up the courtroom such as the judge, jury, and bailiff. All students will be responsible for compiling a list of what each lawyer says, discussing their tone and demeanor, etc. In the end, the classroom jury will decide the verdict and we will compare and discuss the actual outcome of the case in a fishbowl discussion.

The fishbowl discussion will be where I will hear the biggest amount of feedback in relation to the social injustice found in the novel. This is where I will guide them in making real world connections by providing them articles of issues that have happened in the news within the past year or so.

Appendix 1

The Common Core Standards in reading literature, reading informational text, writing, and language are as follows:

- RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
- RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- RL.8.6a. Analyze full-length novels, short stories, poems, and other genres by authors who represent diverse world cultures.
- RL.8.11. Interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, artistically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.
- RI.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.8.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
- RI.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

- W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
 - a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

- e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
 - W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
 - b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
 - W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
 - W.8.4a. Produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives.
 - W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
 - W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
 - W.8.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
 - a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).
 - b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).
 - W.8.11b. Create poetry, stories, plays, and other literary forms (eg. videos, art work).
 - L.8.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
 - b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
 - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
 - L.8.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.

c. Spell correctly.

- L.8.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

- L.8.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.

b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).

- L.8.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Gallery Walk Images

Image 1: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hec.28132/>

Image 2: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/npsc.18539/>

Image 3: <http://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000288>

Image 4: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/ppmsca/06500/06591v.jpg>

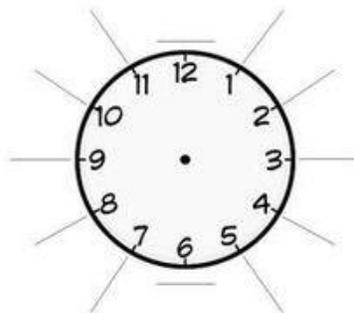
Image 5: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003654393/>

Discussion Appointment Partners or Clock Buddies



In Albany:	
In Buffalo:	
In New York City:	
In Syracuse:	

Clock Buddies



Make appointments with students in the class. Once you have agreed upon an appointment, write the other student's name next to that time on the clock.
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<http://www.ck12.org/subject/math/>

Gallery Walk Quotes

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that me should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

- Jesus of Nazareth, Matthew 7:12

"Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss."

- Tai Shang Kan Ying P'ien

"Never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself."

- Confucius

"One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma. Other behavior is due to selfish desires."

- Brihaspate, Mahabharata (Anusasana Parva, Section CXIII, Verse 8)

"None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

- An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith 13 (p. 56)

"What is hateful to yourself, do not do to your fellow man. That is the whole Torah; the rest is just commentary."

- Talmud Shabbat 31a

"One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts."

- Yoruba Proverb

"And as ye would that me should do to tyou, do ye also to them likewise."

- Jesus of Nazareth, Luke 6:31

"Ascribe not to any sould that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not."

- Baha'u'llah

"Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing."

- Thales (c. 624 BC – c. 546 BC)

- Jigsaw Activities
- Quiz-Quiz Trade
- World Café
- Fish Bowl Seminar
- Quick Writes
- End of Unit Assessments

Annotated Bibliography

Gleaves, Dayna Durbin. "School Desegregation Pioneers." LEARN NC: K-12 Teaching and Learning From the UNC School of Education. Accessed October 27, 2016. <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/2714>.

Lai, Thanhha. *Inside Out and Back Again*.

A 10-year-old Vietnamese girl named Ha tells this novel in free verse narrative poems. It takes place in 1975 Saigon as the Communists are taking over. Ha and her family decide to flee their home country in search of safety. They live for a brief time in a refugee camp before finding sponsorship to America. Ha's life continues to turn "inside out" as they settle in Alabama and she has to learn a completely new lifestyle while facing discrimination in her neighborhood and at school. Eventually, her life turns "back again" when she finds acceptance from people around her and success in school.

Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960.

Scout is now an adult looking back on her childhood and retelling the time when her father, Atticus, took a stand for a black man named Tom Robinson. Scout also shares with us the mystery of her neighbor, Boo Radley, and the time he finally came out of his house after 15 years. This novel deals with topics of both racism, morality, and courage.

Linder, Doug. "The Trials of The Scottsboro Boys." *The Trials of The Scottsboro Boys*. 1999. Accessed October 27, 2016. <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scottsboro/scottsb.htm>.

This is the true story behind some of the topics discussed in Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*. In March of 1931, two white girls accused nine black teenagers of gang raping them on a Southern Railroad freight train. Over the course of two decades, these boys produced more trials, convictions, reversals, and retrials in American history. It took until 1950 for these "boys" to finally leave Alabama.

McKay, Brett and Kate. "Life Lessons From Atticus Finch." *The Art of Manliness*.

February 2, 2011. Accessed October 27, 2016.

<http://www.artofmanliness.com/2011/02/02/lessons-in-manliness-from-atticus-finch/>.

An article that helps define Atticus Finch's character throughout the novel. This is a great article to introduce to young readers to help them define character traits of Atticus Finch.

Schow, Ashe. "Atticus Finch: American Literature's Most Celebrated Rape Apologist."

Washington Examiner. December 16, 2014. Accessed October 27, 2016.
<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/atticus-finch-american-literatures-most-celebrated-rape-apologist/article/2557457>.

Schow writes a counterargument to the popular belief that Atticus Finch is an amazing man and lawyer. In this rebuttal to the court room cross-examination, Schow stands up for sexual assault “victim”, Mayella Ewell, and defends her accusations and how insensitive Atticus actually was to her cry for help. Comparing it to the laws we have today, Schow makes some very good points as to how Atticus’s tone and comments would never have been tolerated today.

Strom, Margot Stern. "Why "To Kill a Mockingbird" Still Resonates Today." Facing Today: A Facing History Blog. November 12, 2014. Accessed October 27, 2016.
<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/why-to-kill-a-mockingbird-still-resonates-today>.

An article written in 2014 that ties the heated topics of *To Kill A Mockingbird* into today’s culture and society. Strom carefully connects incidents’ in the book to events that are happening throughout the world during our own time period to show how these topics needs to be discussed, addressed, and solved once and for all.

"Sojourner Truth Speech of 1851, ‘Ain't I a Woman’." YouTube. 9 May 2011. Accessed October 28, 2016. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XilHJc9IZvE>.

This reenactment of Sojourner Truth’s famous “Ain’t I A Woman” speech helps students hear the tone and dialect of this speech.

"Welcome to EngageNY | EngageNY." Welcome to EngageNY | EngageNY. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.engageny.org/>.

A curriculum developed by EngageNY that breaks down the Common Core State Standards and applies them to every part of each of the curriculum modules. This module, with the theme of “Taking A Stand”, assesses all standards through individual, small group, and whole group lessons. Each module ends with a culminating activity such as an expository essay, an argumentative essay, a reader’s theater, etc. Activities and answer keys are provided for almost all lessons, as well as scripted directions to execute each lesson. Formal assessments are also provided for mid-unit and end-of-unit checks.

¹ "Welcome to EngageNY | EngageNY." Welcome to EngageNY | EngageNY. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.engageny.org/>.

² Lai, Thanhha. Inside Out and Back Again.

³ "Welcome to EngageNY": Module 1 Unit 1 Lesson 15. <https://www.engageny.org/>.

⁴ Ibid., Module 1 Unit 2 Lesson 17.

⁵ Ibid., Module 2 Unit 1 Lesson 1.

⁶ Ibid., Module 2 Unit 1 Lesson 2.

⁷ "Sojourner Truth Speech of 1851, 'Ain't I a Woman'." YouTube. 9 May 2011. Accessed October 28, 2016. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XilHJc9IZvE>.

⁸ Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960. Chapters 1-2.

⁹ "Welcome to EngageNY": Lesson 15. <https://www.engageny.org/>. Module 2 Unit 1 Lesson 12.

¹⁰ *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Directed by Robert Mulligan. By Horton Foote. Performed by Gregory Peck, Mary Badham, and Phillip Alford.

¹¹ Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960. Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

¹² Strom, Margot Stern. "Why To Kill A Mockingbird Still Resonates Today." 12 Nov 2014. Facing Today: A Facing History Blog.

¹³ Schow, Ashe. "Atticus Finch: American Literature's Most Celebrated Rape Apologist." Washington Examiner. December 16, 2014. Accessed October 27, 2016.