



## ***Teaching Tolerance through the Civil Rights Movement***

By Amy Stokes, 2014 CTI Fellow  
Lebanon Road Elementary School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Language Arts/Social Studies 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

**Keywords:** Civil Rights Movement, Tolerance, Justice, Fairness, Segregation

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This unit is designed for fourth and fifth grade students as a way to integrate reading skills and social studies content. After completing the unit the students will be able to discuss the Civil Rights Movement in depth using domain specific vocabulary and events in great depth. They will be able to take the knowledge they have gained during this unit and express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of who they are. They will recognize their own responsibility to stand up against prejudice and injustice in the world by relating it to the Civil Rights Movement. Finally I hope that they will be able to make decisions about how to stand against injustice in their everyday lives and recognize their own biases, in hopes of making them better citizens.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to fifty students in fourth and fifth grade.*

*I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.*

## Teaching Tolerance through the Civil Rights Movement

*Amy Stokes*

### Introduction

This unit is designed for fourth and fifth grade students as a way to integrate reading and social studies curricula. After completing the unit the students will be able to understand domain specific vocabulary dealing with the Civil Rights Movement and consider this time period from different perspectives. They will be able to use detail and examples from the various articles, biographies, and books about the Civil Rights Movement when explaining what the text says explicitly (close reading) and when drawing inferences based on what they have read. They will be able to compare and contrast first and second hand accounts of the Civil Rights Movement and write summaries of events that occurred from different viewpoints. They will compare different types of literature about the Civil Rights Movement with an emphasis on theme and close reading of the illustrations in the text. They will also be able to engage in collaborative discussions with partners through literature circles.

I am currently in my eleventh year of teaching and have been teaching fourth grade for the last three years. I teach at Lebanon Road Elementary School in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, an urban school district in North Carolina. The school motto is Learn, Respect, and Excel. Teachers and students are encouraged to be leaders and take an active role in their learning. Teachers lead the professional development and students' lead collaborative book clubs, science labs, and math workshops. Lebanon Road Elementary is a Title 1 school in Mint Hill. We have approximately eight hundred and fifty- five students enrolled at Lebanon Road Elementary. All of our students receive free breakfast and lunch. The ratio of students to teachers at Lebanon Road Elementary is 18:1. Student population at Lebanon Road Elementary is diverse, with a racial makeup of: African American (39.6%), Hispanic (32.6%), and White (23.7%). We also have several subgroups including economically disadvantaged, students with learning disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and students on the autism spectrum.

The class for which I am writing this unit is quite diverse. This group includes twenty five students: five English Language Learners, six students with learning disabilities in reading, twelve students who are reading below grade level proficiency, and two students who are on grade level. My class is composed of fourteen girls and eleven boys. I have sixteen African American students, four multi-racial students, and five Hispanic students. Most of these students have entered fourth grade with little understanding of The Civil Rights Movement and the freedoms it provided that they take for granted on a daily basis. They have a difficult time with social skills, problem solving, and working in

collaborative groups. They respond well to direct instruction and modeling of social skills, along with positive reinforcement. My classroom is quite diverse in culture and learning styles. I believe that differentiation for students is the only way to effectively reach all of my students and challenge them effectively. This unit will be applicable to fourth - fifth grade instructors who want to teach about diversity, justice, equality, and personal freedoms. It will integrate language arts and social studies content objectives.

### **Rationale**

I chose to base my unit on this topic because my students are only aware of the Civil Rights Movement in the simplest of terms. They have never really given much thought to how the changes that were set in motion during that time period have affected their daily lives and continue to do so. They may have had some exposure to Martin Luther King Junior and Rosa Parks in the lower grades. I want to challenge these students to go deeper into this movement and see the changes that resulted from numerous others who gave their lives to fight for civil rights. I really want them to be able to empathize and appreciate the liberties we have today so that they will see the value of continuing to ensure that everyone has these rights in the future.

The Southern Poverty Law Center issued a report several years ago which evaluated the various sets of state standards on how well they supported teaching about the Civil Rights Movement. The study revealed that North Carolina did not place an emphasis on the movement and provided teachers little guidance on what should be used to teach the movement. I wanted to develop a unit that teachers would be able to use in the classroom to help guide a new generation of students to care actively about justice and equality. I want my students to learn more than just the sequence of events and the names of famous leaders. I want them to feel the struggles, risks, and pain that those events created, and to learn the importance of preserving through difficult times. I want them to express empathy if someone is excluded or mistreated. I believe they need this to become effective citizens. I hope by teaching this unit, I will be providing the tools my students need to create a better future for all people.

### **Content Objectives**

My objectives are driven by the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts for fourth and fifth graders. By including both fourth and fifth grade standards, I hope to better prepare and challenge our students while reviewing previously taught reading skills and strategies. My main focus in this unit is for students to understand and talk about texts with themes that deal with social issues. I want them to be able to make connections to the struggles of the characters in the text and develop a sense of empathy. They should be able to distinguish between first and second hand accounts and verbalize the pros and cons of both types of accounts in relation to the Civil Rights Movement. I want them to take notice of the way the illustrations are used in a text to convey mood, a sort of close

reading of the pictures in a text. I also want them to be able to close read the text when citing evidence to support their opinions and discussion points. Student will be inferring different character's motivations, feelings, and changes in our read aloud so teaching them about dynamic and static characters is also an essential component. They should realize not only that characters change throughout the novel, but be able to cite evidence to prove or disprove theories about why they change.

I will also be using the North Carolina Essential Standards for Social Studies to integrate the topic of civil rights and the themes of justice and perseverance. Fourth grade students study about North Carolina history and will specifically read about the Greensboro sit-ins. They will be able to directly relate what they have learned about the Civil Rights Movement in fourth grade to United States history in fifth grade. After reading the texts from the unit they will have learned about several historical figures that were instrumental in helping with the movement. With the above mentioned character work, they will be able to point out characteristics such as perseverance that helped these people overcome their struggles and accomplish the lofty goal of equal rights for all. I also want them to compare the roles of minorities in our society from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement. They will be doing some collaborative group research, along with the timeline that we create from events in the read aloud text to help facilitate this.

### **Teaching Strategies**

In this unit, I will provide students with several opportunities to demonstrate their learning with different strategies so that students with different learning styles will have meaningful experiences. I will use role playing with vocabulary to help solidify the meaning of words such as *discrimination*, *justice*, *equality*, and *segregation*. My students are concrete learners when it comes to vocabulary and I believe there is more value in having them develop skits to act out the words instead of just copying a definition into their journal and studying it for a test. I think that role play actively engages the students and helps to build their critical thinking skills. Allowing my students to act out scenarios which depict these vocabulary terms will generate emotion and the students will associate their emotions with the words. Some of the vocabulary words have very negative connotations and I feel by acting these words out students will be able to grasp that better. I also like the idea of the role playing because it gives them a chance to simulate situations where discrimination and segregation might occur. It takes some of the pressures of simulations off of the teacher because the students are developing the skits. This will provide a strong basis that will enable the students to empathize with the characters and the situations they are enduring as we read texts throughout the unit.

I will be using the Socratic Seminar to help facilitate discussions about our read aloud text. I have learned that Socratic seminar is a great way to get students to discuss concerns and issues in a non-threatening environment. We will be discussing parts of the novel *The Watson's Go to Birmingham* and examining our personal values about race and

discrimination. Since these topics are issues that can evoke personal emotions and feelings, I believed that using Socratic Seminar would be an effective way for all students to share and for us to build classroom community. It will provide the formal structure that my class needs to feel safe and comfortable in sharing their thoughts with each other. I feel that it is very important to discuss with students how to agree and disagree respectfully because most of them do not have those examples or models at home. I also like the idea of the classroom being an open forum for discussing issues and sharing beliefs. The classroom will be set up so that all the students can see each other so that they can look at each other when they are speaking. I plan on having them bring their chairs and place them into a circle. They will use our classroom meeting rules so that we guarantee respectful talk and behavior is used. I will facilitate the discussion with a guiding question from the novel, and then lead the students to think critically about the implications for what they are learning in the novel. The last part of the discussions will be focused on how they can apply themes such as perseverance and equality to their own lives. I will keep informal notes on each child to help guide my conferences. For example, if I see a student is struggling with being able to form an opinion based on facts, then I will pull that student before the next seminar and help them individually.

Another strategy that I will use is literature circles. Literature circles are small groups of students brought together to share a book. Literature circles teach students how to talk with peers respectfully about a shared text. It also allows students to compare and build off of their peer's ideas about a shared text. I chose the books that I have selected for literature circles specifically because they lend themselves to close reading and discussion. We have done a lot of work in our seminar with examining the author's word choice and syntax to help understand the tone and meaning of a story. I want to be able to carry that learning into my classroom and these books lend themselves to that type of close reading. My students are still developing social skills and it is crucial that I ensure the books are engaging and thought provoking so that the literature circles will be successful in guiding them to think about their personal beliefs. The books will be centered on the Civil Rights Movement. The students will have the opportunity to read and participate in literature circles based on their independent reading levels as a way to differentiate instruction. All books that are used for the literature circles will also be available in the classroom library so students may choose to read them or reread them at any point in the year. To correspond with the topic of Civil Rights, other books will be available and on display in our classroom library for independent reading and research.

I will also be integrating technology through the use of videos and interactive student made presentations. The videos that I plan on using come from the Southern Poverty Law Center on teaching tolerance in the classroom. I will show video clips with the Greensboro Four being interviewed at the time of the Woolworth lunch counter sit-in to provide a firsthand account of events of The Civil Rights Movement. They will then be able to compare the firsthand account of the Greensboro sit in to the fictional account in the text *Freedom on the Menu*. I want students to be able to explain how having seen the

video and listening to the firsthand account helps them better understand the fictional account. This activity help integrate the social studies objectives for fourth grade because students are required to learn about events in North Carolina history that brought about change in our lives and world. The text and video will be a nice supplement to our social studies book which does not provide a wealth of detail or information. They will also take on the role of a character of their own choosing from the text and write a summary as that person. Imagine having students taking on the role of the owner of Woolworth, or one of the ladies working at the lunch counter. Writing from a different viewpoint is a great way to build those critical thinking skills and helps students to realize how point of view can shape a text. This will allow me to see that they really understand that character's emotions and struggles during the movement and help them to develop empathy for those who face discrimination.

The last set of strategies that I will use are modeling, anchor charts, and read aloud. These strategies build upon each other so I have grouped them together. Read aloud will be used to model my thinking for my students. The expectations that are modeled during read aloud will also be transferred over to the literature circles. Anchor charts are a great way to record thoughts and reading strategies while modeling for students. They will provide visual support and reminders for students as we travel through out the unit. It is important that my students have repeated exposure to modeling of reading strategies so that they are successful when they read independently. The read aloud book is where I will develop discussion questions so that all students, regardless of reading levels, can participate in the Socratic Seminar.

### **Classroom Activities**

For the unit opener I wanted to start with an inquiry activity. I would suggest putting students in small groups, no more than four in each group. Select four or five photographs from the Civil Rights Movement, print them out, and place them in an envelope for each group. Explain to students that the envelopes contain clues to the next unit that we will be starting and that their job is to work together to figure out what they will be learning about. Allow them about ten minutes to look at and discuss the photographs and then have them write a two-sentence summary about what they think they will be learning. You may wish to give each group question stems to help with the discussion of the photographs so that they focus on setting and really look for clues in the picture, along with any emotions that the photos make evoke. After having groups share their thoughts, discuss each picture and its significance in the new unit.

To introduce the vocabulary for the new unit, give each group a list of two or three words. Explain to them that they are going to look up the definition for the words and then think of a way act out a scenario that demonstrates the meaning of a word. To model this for students use the word *discrimination*. Have several students help you act out a scenario in which the class is at recess. The boys are playing football and you ask to

join the game. The boys tell you that you cannot play because you are a girl and girls cannot play sports. The class will probably say that this is unfair and may need a little help in determining that it is discrimination because the boys are excluding the girl based on her gender. Model your thinking aloud for them and allow them to share their thoughts and personal responses. This is also a great activity to build empathy for others.

For the opening social studies lesson I will have students think, pair, and then write about what freedom is to them. After recording their thoughts about freedom we will create a KWLA (what you know, what you want to know, what you learned, how to apply it) for The Civil Rights Movement. We will use this chart throughout the unit to record information we learn while working. The information that we record in this chart will be based more on the events of Civil Rights Movement and facts they are learning.

To introduce the students to the concept of literature circles and Socratic seminar I will use the classroom read aloud text, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. During the interactive read aloud, I will model and teach specific reading strategies such as predicting, character analysis, and close reading. After each read aloud session, students will have the opportunity to practice think, pair, write and then share out their ideas in a small group setting. This will help to build classroom community and the open environment necessary for the Socratic Seminar and literature circles. I have the read aloud schedule and questions for each day listed below.

### *Day 1*

Pre-Reading activities will include the anticipation guide below and introducing the book by predicting what it will be about and how it relates to our unit. You may wish to show a slide show with pictures that depict the time period so students are better able to understand the setting of the novel.

#### Anticipation Guide:

Have students number their paper 1-10. Have them answer with a True or False.

1. It is best to fight if backed into a corner.
2. Bullies are really just insecure people.
3. Welfare is only for people who choose not to work.
4. You should always show respect for people older than you.
5. Your teenage years are difficult and confusing times.
6. The only way to learn a lesson is by experience.
7. Church is a safe place.
8. Racism does not exist in our world today.
9. You should talk about your feelings instead of holding them inside.
10. Younger siblings will always be teased the most in a family.

After introducing the book have students find Flint, Michigan and Birmingham, Alabama on the map. How do these cities compare to Charlotte, North Carolina? Discuss geographical features of each city and state. Read aloud chapter one.

#### Chapter One Questions

- Why do you think Byron considers his family weird?
- Have you ever liked something that the rest of your friends did not? Explain.

#### *Day 2*

Review chapter one. Discuss answers from chapter one. Read chapter two aloud to the class focusing on the characters and how they interact with each other.

#### Chapter Two Questions

- Describe Kenny's relationship with Byron.
- Predict whether or not the new student will "save" Kenny? Provide evidence for your prediction.

#### *Day 3*

Review chapter two. Share answers from questions and read chapter three. Model how to make text to self connections while reading.

#### Chapter Three Questions

- Which of the events in chapter three made you laugh? Why?
- Discuss how Rufus and Cody are treated at school and have students make predictions as to why they are treated that way. Have them brainstorm better ways to treat people who are different and make connections on that treatment to their own lives.

#### *Day 4*

Review the answers from chapter three questions and read chapter four. Model with anchor charts how to create a character sketch for Kenny and Byron. Make sure that students understand that the character traits they select for the sketches must have evidence from the text to support it.

#### *Day 5*



Review chapter four and read chapter five. Add to the character sketches for Kenny and Byron. Have students make inferences about the character based on the character sketches you have created as a class. This a great place to stop and discuss the types of discrimination that have been noted in the book so far. Make sure to focus not only on segregation but the way that the characters treat anyone who is viewed as different.

### *Day 6*

Review chapter five. Create a class Venn Diagram of Momma and Byron based upon student feedback. Discuss with the class the use of profanity in the book. Why would the author choose to include profanity in a children's novel? What does this tell us about the characters that use it?

### Chapter Six Questions

- Explain why Bryon and Momma argue over welfare food.
- What does the fact that Bryon gets sick after hitting the bird tell us about his character?

### *Day 7*

Review chapter six and discuss the answers to the questions from chapter six. Read chapter seven.

### Chapter Seven Questions

- What do you think that Byron's haircut symbolizes in the story?
- Do you think that Bryon's punishment is fair? Explain.
- Discuss how Kenny's reaction to Bryon's punishment tells us as readers a lot of about him as person. Model making inferences through a character's thoughts and actions and then have the students to try the strategy using Bryon and his reaction to the punishment.

### *Day 8*

Review chapter seven and discuss the responses from the questions. Read chapter eight. Have students focus again on making inferences about a character based on their actions.

### Chapter Eight Questions

- How are Momma's feelings about the Ultra-Glide different from the rest of the family? What evidence from the text supports your answer?

- Have students reflect on Mom and Dad's plans for Bryon. Will it be beneficial?

### *Day 9*

Review chapter eight and discuss the answers to the questions. Read chapter nine.

#### Chapter Nine Questions

- What outcome do Mom and Dad expect from Bryon after visiting Alabama?
- Explain Joey's reaction to the angel. You may wish to discuss this as class a little more in depth and delve deeper into the symbolism that surrounds this event in the text. Be respectful of cultural and religious differences.
- Why does the author put such an emphasis on Momma's organization of the trip? What does this tell us about the family dynamics?
- Predict whether or not Kenny will like the South. Make sure to include character traits to support your answer.

### *Day 10*

Review chapter nine and discuss the questions. Read chapter ten.

Model for students how to create a character change chart for Byron from the beginning of the story to this point. Discuss how he has changed and cite evidence from the text. Have students work in small groups to reflect on why he has changed. You may need to scaffold this activity so that students are able to build theories as to why the change occurred.

### *Day 11*

Recap and review chapter ten. Review character change chart for Byron. Read chapter eleven. Have students to reflect on a time when you met someone who was nothing like what you expected. Talk about preconceived notions and stereotypes in depth. Have students determine where these stereotypes originate and how they can best deal with them.

- Why do you think Bryon was surprised when he met Grandma Sands? What stereotypes did he have in his mind about her?

### *Day 12*

Review chapter eleven and refresh students' memories about the previous discussion on stereotypes as it relates to the novel. Read chapter twelve. Discuss static and dynamic

characters. Have students identify static and dynamic characters from the novel. Allow them to work in partners with the text to find examples to support their selections.

### *Day 13*

Review chapter twelve. Read chapter thirteen. Discuss Byron's insistence on going to Collier's Landing and why this is an important event in the story. What inferences can we make about Byron and Kenny based on their actions in this scene?

### *Day 14*

Review chapter thirteen and the events leading up to Collier's landing. Read chapter fourteen. Use a video clip of the Alabama church bombing to show a firsthand account. Allow students to compare and contrast the video with the fictional account from the novel. I would be sensitive to the nature of the scenes in the video as they may be upsetting to some students. Discussion about events leading up to the bombing and how the community in Alabama responded will be critical to ensure that students are made aware that even though violence was used by some groups, most civil rights leaders used peaceful responses to incidents such as this. You could even have students debate which they think would have been the most effective way to respond to these events.

### *Day 15*

Review chapter fourteen. Model how to complete the character change chart on Byron since you have completed the novel. Then allow students to complete the character change chart with Kenny and assist them if needed. Have them reflect on what the underlying theme in the novel is and how it goes along with the unit.

As a culminating activity for the read aloud text, we will create a class timeline with illustrations for each of the events related to the Civil Rights Movement that are discussed in the text. I will allow students to work in pairs or individually to research more information on the events in the book before creating the timeline.

My learning goals for the Literature Circles are for the students to become familiar with the events that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement; to learn about famous leaders such as Richard Wright, Ruby Bridges, and Rosa Parks and how they contributed to the movement; to "read" closely the illustrations in the picture books so as to gain an understanding of how different people were portrayed by different authors while gathering clues about the time period; and to become familiar with vocabulary and terms such as segregation, discrimination, integration, and Jim Crow Laws. They are also expected to use the reading strategies to make connections, question, predict, and visualize. The books that I plan on using for this are: *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen

*Levine, Rosa by Nikki Giovanni, Richard Wright and the Library Card by William Miller, and Goin' Someplace Special by Patricia McKissack.*

To introduce literature circles for this unit, I will show the class each book and give a brief summary of it. The students will have a chance to write down their top choice and why they want to read that book. I will use these preferences, along with their independent reading levels, to help me create the literature groups. As a whole group, we will review the students' role in literature meetings and the teacher's role so that they know they are responsible for discussing the text and that I am there to facilitate when necessary. One strategy that I love to use to ensure that all students participate in discussion is to give them each two pennies at the beginning of the meeting. As students share their thoughts about the topic of discussion, they put their "two cents" in the middle of the group. Once everyone has had a chance to share, they can redistribute the two pennies and move on to the next topic. This has worked really well in the past for students who do not like to talk and especially for those who love to dominate the discussions. During literature circles students have different roles within each group that help ensure that students are working collaboratively: Discussion Director, Memory Maker, Illustrator, Word Worker and Summarizer. The Discussion Director develops the questions that the group needs to discuss and he or she is responsible for facilitating the group's discussion. The Memory Maker finds the passages that are memorable, puzzling, funny or important for the group to reference and read closely. The Illustrator draws what he or she reads. It could be a cartoon sequence or a diagram of some type. The Word Worker looks for words that are worth remembering or looking up. The Summarizer prepares the summary of the reading for that day. These students are allowed to choose the format in which they do the summary. I also require all students to use sticky notes to mark places in the text that they wish to discuss with the group. They should have at least two of these "talking points" marked before coming to the meeting.

*Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine*

- Discuss the mood of the illustrations and how they change at the end of the story.
- How does Levine symbolize freedom and slavery?
- Have students create a chart to organize the events that occurred in Henry's life which could include: when and where he was born, hardships and challenges he faces throughout the book, how he overcame these difficulties, and how his life was changed by his circumstances.

*Rosa by Nikki Giovanni*

- The book is based on Rosa Park's life. Provide students with an opportunity to gather background information on her.
- Discuss what role the illustrations play in setting the mood of the story.
- Have students to develop and discuss a theme for the story.
- Focus on turning points and when they occur in the story.

*Richard Wright and the Library Card by William Miller*

- Talk about narrative nonfiction and model some of the characteristics of that genre using the book.
- Have students notice Richard's thought and actions throughout the book and infer what those things tell us about Richard as a person.
- Discuss symbolism in the book.

*Goin' Somewhere Special by Patricia McKissack*

- Focus on the setting of the story and how McKissack uses it to set the tone.
- Have students notice Tricia Ann's interactions with different people throughout the book and create a character sketch based on her actions and words.
- Make sure that the students realize that the library symbolizes freedom.
- This book mentions Jim Crow Laws so you may want to allow students to research further information on them and the role they played in the South at that time.

I plan on using these books in literature circles for four weeks. The students will get to a chance to read and discuss all four books (I will assign a book each week). After all students have read all four books, then we can discuss them as a class. We would talk about the illustrations and how closely reading them helped us to better understand the character's emotions. We would also discuss how the illustrations worked well to determine the mood for the books and why the illustrators may have made the choices that they did. Finally, I would ask the students to pick their favorite out of the four books to extend the story. Explain that they will be picking up where the author left off in one of the books. For example, in *Henry's Freedom Box*, they would write about what they think happened after Henry's arrival in Philadelphia. Or in *Rosa* they could write an alternate ending to the bus boycott. These writings will help me to assess if the students are able to make inferences based on the information they have read and if they are able to put themselves in the character's shoes by imagining what they would do.

To teach perspective to the students, I plan on using the book *Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges*. After reading the book aloud, students will discuss how the story might have been different if it had been told by someone else. As a class we would brainstorm different people who could have told the story (other children at the school, the teachers at the school). Students will have to select one person from our list and trying telling one of the small moments from the book from that perspective. They will then be able to meet with partners to share their writings. I would have them think about the differences between the two texts. We would then discuss what other questions we have left for Ruby Bridges after reading. That would lead us into the next part of the assignment where they create interview questions for Bridges based on their musings. Students would develop at least six questions that they want Ruby Bridges to answer and come up with possible answers as if they were her. They will hold mock interviews with a partner. Each person

will have the opportunity to be Ruby Bridges and the interviewer. I will be able to assess how well the students understood what was going on in the time period by listening to the types of questions they are asking and how they are responding to the questions being asked. It will also give them a chance to step into the protagonist's shoes and become Ruby Bridges, which is great for helping them to develop empathy.

As a culminating activity for the entire unit I would like for my students to reflect on their own interactions with others. I want them to relate how people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds and different subject positions interacted during the Civil Rights Movement, and to think in turn about how they interact with people who are different from them in their everyday lives. I plan on having them rate themselves on a scale of one to ten (one being the lowest and ten being the highest) on how tolerant they feel they are. This information does not have to be shared with their classmates but rather is for personal reflection. Introducing them to the concept of microaggressions may be tricky because these types of exchanges are usually accidental in nature. By asking my students to think about their interactions with people who are different from them, I hope to get a discussion flowing in the classroom. I want them to realize that this is a type of discrimination and can be just as hurtful as the "in your face" discrimination that we have read about in the unit. I plan on showing some examples of microaggressions from a slide show so that students are made aware of that this type of discrimination exists today. A few examples from the slide show are a young Latino girl being chosen to play "Dora the Explorer" in the school play because she looks Spanish. Another example is a student who is told that she is pretty for a "dark skinned girl." I think my students will be able to relate to these types of comments but will not have realized how hurtful they potentially are. As a class, we will brainstorm ways that we can become more tolerant of each other and set goals to be more accepting of others. I will also have students set personal goals and reflect on them throughout the year. Depending on student reaction and feedback, we may create our own slide show with examples of these micro aggressions that they have experienced.

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

RL4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Students need to be able to cite the text and use it to support inferences and predictions made during reading.

RL4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

Students need to be able to identify the theme of what they are reading and summarize what they have read.

RL4.6 Compare and contrast the points of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Students need to be able to identify how first and third person narrations are different and compare them.

RL4.10 By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Students need to be able to read and comprehend text within the high level range of text complexity.

RI4.9 Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Students need to be able to synthesize information from multiple texts.

RL5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

Students need to be able to explain how characters in a story respond to challenges the face.

RL5.6 Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

Students need to be able to explain how point of view and perspective influences the text they are reading.

### **Reading List for Students**

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1995. This is a first-person account, written in the slang of a 10-year-old boy that examines how he and his family react to events in civil rights history.

McKissack, Pat, and Jerry Pinkney. *Goin' Someplace Special*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2001. This book is based on the early life of the author, Patricia McKissack, who grew up having to abide by Jim Crow laws.

Miller, William, and R. Gregory Christie. *Richard Wright and the Library Card*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 1997. This book is based on an episode from the life of Richard Wright and helps readers to understand the importance of learning to read.

Weatherford, Carole Boston, and Jerome Lagarrigue. *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-ins*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2005. This book is based on an actual event that occurred in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Levine, Ellen, and Kadir Nelson. *Henry's Freedom Box*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2007. This book is a true story of a slave and the Underground Railroad.

### **Bibliography for Teachers**

Beers, G. Kylene. *Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. This is a great resource for strategies to get students to read closely by noticing signposts in literature. It also includes lessons with examples of books to use to teach each lesson.

Bridges, Ruby. *Through My Eyes*. New York: Scholastic Press, 1999. This is a great book for read aloud to teach perspective.

Neamen, Mimi, and Mary Strong. *Literature Circles Cooperative Learning for Grades 3-8*. Englewood, Colo.: Teacher Ideas, 1992. This is a great resource for teachers that need a refresher on how to use literature circles in the classroom.

Zakin, Andrea. "Hand to Hand: Teaching Tolerance and Social Justice One Child at a Time." *Childhood Education*, January 1, 2012. This article offers several great strategies for dealing with discrimination.