Literacy in the 21st Century: Developing Amorphic Literacy

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
High School English Language Arts Grades 10-11

Keywords: Technology, Literacy, 21st Century Skills

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

Synopsis:

The goal of this unit will be to expand literacy in the English classroom beyond the normal expectations of traditional reading and writing. Focus will be placed on digital literacy but students will also embrace civic literacy, financial literacy, workplace literacy and global literacy. Students will ultimately develop amorphic literacy; i.e. literacy that continues to morph yet remains agile due to the rapid change in technology. Technology will continue to be woven through each unit and serve as a tool for developing literacy, critical thinking skills, and communication. The unit will focus on ethics and ideally enable students to become more proficient readers, thinkers and problem solvers, shifting the focus to a more holistic approach versus a traditional focus on classical literature. Students will examine various forms of texts making connections through the process and recognize the value of literature in their future endeavors, which will ideally improve engagement, proficiency, and aid in their development as contributors in society.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 40 students in English II.

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Melissa Ligh

I. **Overview**

Technology has changed the way students learn and the way teachers teach. In order for a student to truly be prepared for the future, he/she must be agile and able to adapt to the ever-changing world of technology; the student must develop digital literacy. The University Library of the University of Illinois defines digital literacy as:

- The ability to use digital technology, communication tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information.
- The ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources when it is presented via computers.
- A person's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment… Literacy includes the ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments (U.S.Digital Literacy).[1]

The first goal of this unit will be to develop proficient digital thinkers. Many adolescents may be digital natives but this does not mean they possess digital literacy. Students must learn to recognize fallacies on the internet as well as credible resources and learn to be civically responsible through the internet. They must learn not only the ramifications of negative digital communication but ways in which citizens can use digital communication to help market themselves, improve the quality of their lives, and provide value to the world. The unit will therefore place strong emphasis on each of these areas. Students will publish a website, and use online digital databases for research in the course of the year. Throughout the entire semester they will continue to expand upon their website building a portfolio which reflects their college and career readiness and their digital preparedness while simultaneously improving their literacy skills.

Due to the digital explosion, many kids may not realize the power they have to solve problems and they often turn to the internet for solutions. Another goal will be for students to utilize an inquiry based learning approach to research and solve for problems.

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[1] "US Digital Literacy." *US Digital Literacy*. Web. 03 June 2016.

Through this process they will build intentional cross-cultural connections and relationships with others so to pose and solve problems collaboratively and strengthen independent thought. Students will work together as a team to solve for a problem and publish their findings on their self-created website. In essence, they will design and share information, manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information, as well as create, critique, analyze, and evaluate throughout the process. Students will examine multiple forms of multimedia and incorporate this into their projects ensuring they dissect and determine bias. Students will also be asked to find examples of similar issues and or solutions in literature and analyze the piece of literature as part of their final project. Finally, they will also read a novel during the course of the semester and create a detailed digital animation reviewing the novel and relating the central themes and characters back to current issues in the world.

While the unit will be complex and contain many moving parts, the goal will be to connect everything so the student realizes the wholistic and amorphic nature of literacy. Students will be empowered to move through the learning process at their own pace while the teacher acts as facilitator and guides their learning. Ultimately they will use the experience gained from this project, as well as other roles, and create a resume, market themselves through their own website, social media, and digitally printed materials and develop a digital presentation for their peers; in addition, they will be encouraged to develop a video to not only self-critique, but also to market themselves on their website.

The unit will begin with an introduction to digital technology and students will begin with a discussion on the power of the internet. They will also complete a small inquiry project discovering the necessity of writing to a specific audience and purpose. With this in mind, they will begin to create a website which will/should be viewable by all yet focused on marketing themselves. The website will be a foundation from which all other parts will be linked. Students will explore other websites and applications and learn how to insert hyperlinks to relative information. They will also create a blog page as an extension of the website and a hyperlink will be embedded. The students will then begin to discuss both literature and informational texts and explain how digital information is changing the scope of the written word. Students will begin a novel study and sub lessons will be woven into the unit and ideally transformed into the final webpage.

Students will discuss advertising and the impact it has on digital communication. They will discover through inquiry the function of advertising on the economy and consumerism in broad terms. Students will discuss media and propaganda and the impact this has on the written word and rhetoric will be an essential part of these conversations. Different types of rhetoric will be examined, as will bias and credibility. Censorship and political agendas will be touched on as well as reputation and professionalism. Students will complete an inquiry on the impact of social media and debate the pros and cons.

They will be encouraged to develop a social media site (with parent permission) and write a review of things they discover on their blog.

After reading several informational text and short stories which address the concept of ethics, students will continue to add to their website and write a blog on ethics. They will be empowered to choose their own approach and reference any of the texted read and discussed in class; however, they may also reference additional articles. The next phase will be for students to create newsletter or online magazine as a group and they will use the problem solving cycle to develop a business plan, write, edit, and produce the magazine. It must include a section for each of the following:

- Current events/News
- Current events/entertainment
- Health and Wellness
- Finance
- Literature review
- Advertising
- Community/Global justice

Students will work as a team and create the magazine together. It will be important that specific Common Core Objectives are met and each section will focus on a specific standard. Various assessment methods will be used for the magazine and throughout the entire project, with the final website demonstrating mastery of objectives. There will be a higher focus on literature and informational text as students will ultimately be assessed by the state with these types of text; however, students will be exposed to various forms of digital communication and ultimately develop multi-literacies. The goal will be to demonstrate how these literacies morph and yet remain amorphous; i.e. amorphic literacy will emerge.

The semester will be divided into four key units with the first unit focusing on ethics, which will be the focus of this curriculum unit. The ultimate goal of the units and my continued research will be to demonstrate how literacy must fit into a category that is amorphic and ever changing due to the rapid changes in technology. The young adult must in turn be able to navigate and adapt quickly to the rapidly changing digital world and be able to maneuver and evolve. This is only possible when students learn how to read, write, and think critically using digital tools in society. The focus of the English classroom in turn is no longer to simply focus on understanding literature, but understanding the broad concept of developing literacy mastery and determining how he/she can use this to grow and position his/her self in the future.

II. **Focal point one –Current events and ethics**

Guiding/Essential Question for the unit: How does text/media/information impact our ethical views and what are the implications?

Objectives-Derived from North Carolina Common Core standards[2]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

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[2] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.5
Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6
Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Day One: Students will be introduced to the concepts of ethics. They will read a host of articles that explore ethical decisions made by others and the ethical dilemmas that surround them. Article one: *The Entrapment of Jesse Snodgrass*. This story is about an autistic boy who, in an effort to make friends, became the victim of money making drug busts in a high school and was arrested for distributing marijuana. This particular story is ideal because it is relevant to adolescence. Reading and discussion around the premise of the article is ideal for engaging in social discourse. Students will read the story and take part in a Socratic seminar. The goal will be to engage students in conversations that require them to examine the text metaphorically, philosophically, aesthetically, analytically, intertextuality, and ideally critically[3].

It will be important to pick a text that inspires the kids to examine social issues. As stated by Freire (1970), students must learn to read the world and the word so they can become better advocated for social injustice. As Ernest Morrell also encourages teachers to do, we must bring social injustice into the classroom and challenge notions (Morrell). Students have a voice and long to be heard if we offer them a venue to do so, their engagement will be strengthened and they will become stronger advocates for future change, which should be the underlying goal of all English classrooms. This particular article is engaging to all because it is realistic, uses teenage vernacular, discusses issues all teenagers face, and reveals bigger socially unethical practices in society. The teacher will simply facilitate by asking open-ended questions that promote critical thinking. For example:

    a. Tell me what you thought of the outcome of this story.

    b. Was it right for the undercover cop to tout Jesse?

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[3] Leland, Christine, Anne Ociepka, and Kate Kuonen. "Reading from Different Interpretive Stances: In Search of a Critical Perspective." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 55, no. 5 (2012): 428-37. doi:10.1002/jaal.00051.

c. Should he have been held responsible even though he only sold a small amount of marijuana and was unaware of the implications?

d. What other avenues could the police have taken?

e. Are these busts ethical? Why/Why not?

The conversations will exceed the questions in most cases because kids will have passionate views about the story. After a healthy Socratic seminar, students will then pair up and discuss the main idea of the article. The teacher will divide the class into groups based on the number of sections and each group must determine the author's point of view in each section. Once this has been determined the students will write the points on a Padlet board™ and determine the main idea. Students should also continue the conversation outside of the classroom. As Ann Amicucci explores in the article, "How They Really Talk: Two students' Perspectives on Literacies in the Writing Classroom," students like the immediacy of feedback and conversation through digital resources[4]. The teacher should encourage students to discuss a question that was brought up in class around the ethical issues and converse with others through either an Edmodo™, Blackboard, or Moodle site and to take the conversation further through the use of social media. Prompt each student to 'do' something to address the issues and extend the discussion outside of the classroom; in addition, students should be encouraged to become social activist.

Day 2: Students will read the Rolling Stones article "Sexting Shame and Suicide" prior to class and come prepared to discuss. Ideally the articles will be shared several days ahead on Google Classroom or other learning management system so students have ample time to read and annotate. The article will be uploaded via Google Classroom and students will need to ask one question on Versoapp™ prior to coming to class regarding the main idea.

Upon completion of this article, students will then read an article about a young girl who fell victim to sexting and bullying and ultimately committed suicide, Once again the teacher will ask questions which promote critical thinking. As reinforced before, it is

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[4] Amicucci, Ann. (2014) "How They Really Talk.Two students' Perspectives on Literacies in the Writing Classroom." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult learning* (57)6. 483-490

important to pick articles that challenge the child's intellect, reading level, but which still provide mental stimulation and prove to be important to the children and society. As stated in *The Age of Analytical Reading*, "When students partake in philosophical inquiry, they develop reasoning abilities through discourse with others. Through open- ended discussions, students negotiate ideas with peers, experience tension in their thinking, and collectively search for meaning."[5] Examples of questions:

   a. Should she be held responsible since she went to the party and drank alcohol?

   b. What could have been done to prevent this?

   c. What role did technology play in this?

   d. Do we need to change our expectations of others and society based on the explosion of technology?

   e. Do cell phone providers hold any responsibility in this?

   f. What ethical dilemmas arose? What could have been done?

Using an inquiry approach, students will determine potential solutions to this problem and suggest how a school could tackle these issues. They must consider the ethical views of all parties and ensure a solution that is acceptable to students, parents, and community. Students will be responsible for posting a link to their solution on line via Google Classroom or another classroom learning management system. Students must rely on philosophical inquiry and teachers must rely upon the students' inquiry, and from there structure and foster collaborative, strategic, and intellectually engaging language[6]. As reinforced in "Study on Integrating Problem-based Learning into the Innovative Teaching in Information Literacy and Ethics" by Nai-Cheng Changa and Hsuan-Yu Hsuba, a blended classroom utilizing flipped classrooms, online tools, and traditional secretive

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[5] Pennell, Colleen. "In the Age of Analytic Reading." *The Reading Teacher* 68, no. 4 (2014): 251-60. doi:10.1002/trtr.1292.

[6] Pennell, Colleen. "In the Age of Analytic Reading." *The Reading Teacher* 68, no. 4 (2014): 251-60. doi:10.1002/trtr.1292.

methods produce the best results for learning and engagement[7]. The goal of this assignment is to promote critical thinking and enhance research skills as students explore other texts and research around similar issues. Students must ensure the solution is sound based on reliable and credible inquiry and they must also posit a viable solution for all parties. Students are encouraged to work in groups through a Google Document and share questions, research, ideas, etc. virtually. Students will have a week to complete and the majority of the work will take place online through collaboration with their peers.

Day 3: Students will read articles on the recent current events including Ivanna Trump's speech and accusations of plagiarism, the Ryan Locthe's scandal, and a story of a young pregnant woman who refused treatment due to religious beliefs and lost her baby as a result. The teacher may opt to pick other articles and is encouraged to use current event articles that bring attention to an ethical or moral problem. After each article is read, the students will work in groups and discuss their opinions. They will then discuss the main idea of each article and post the main idea on a Padlet™ created by the teacher.

The teacher will have a brief Socratic seminar on the three types of rhetoric and the class will determine which was used in the article. Students will discuss the author's point of view as it relates to rhetoric and discuss bias the author may have. Students will be asked to pick one article and write a similar article with a different point of view.

Students will then read an article on Aristotle's philosophy and other philosophers and reflect on the moral and ethical beliefs that guided each. After, students will be asked to write a blog for their website which discusses their views on ethics in the world today. They must use examples from five credible articles/sources to support their views and add hyperlinks to the articles they use, as well as include citations. Upon completion the students will peer edit and provide feedback. The following must be met and a rubric will be provided.

1. Read the article *Elements of a Moral Philosophy* and the philosophies of other great philosophers (see links on GC)
2. Consider these perspectives and decide what you agree /disagree with

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[7] Nai-Cheng Changa, Hsuan-Yu HsubA. Study on Integrating Problem-based Learning into the Innovative Teaching in Information Literacy and Ethics
Journal of Educational Media & Library Sciences.53(2) 180-192
DOI:10.6120/JoEMLS.2016.532/0010.

3. Think back on the articles we have read and determine current society's biggest moral dilemmas (which may or may not include these)
4. Write an argument of persuasion using ethos, logos, and pathos (strong ethos) regarding your ethical views and how these compare to past and present views and how these compare to current societal views (based on the articles we have read).

5. Cite/reference the reading using MLA format

6. Make sure to explain the dilemmas we face and what makes something an ethical problem (i.e. moral decision making)

7. Offer a sound solution that respects diversity in our society and supports growth of people.

8. Make sure to explain why it is important to have ethics and what constitutes ethics

9. Ensure paper is grammatically correct and professionally written

10. Write in 3rd person and include a strong thesis statement which guides the body of the response

The purpose of this assignment is multilayered. Students will develop numerous skills, including writing on a collegiate level, inquiry and problem solving, and critical analyzing of text. Students will also share links to their website and peer review outside of class. They will be responsible for offering SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, & Timebound) feedback to each person they review and they must review two students' work. Students will be expected to apply this feedback into their revisions and upload a link to the final product (website) within a week of revisions. Ernest Morrell, Rudy Duenas, Veronica and Jorge Lopez explain in *Critical Media Pedagogy*, students should learn about the various hegemonic forces in media and produce their own

hegemonic messages to address the realities. "Students need to use tools at their disposal tell uncomfortable narratives."[8]

The teacher should encourage dialogue with the students also through digital resources. This means the teachers and the students should be engaging in meaningful powerful discussions using the tools and resources provided. This not only extends learning outside of the classroom but assists in developing strong and meaningful relationships, something that remains a necessity in a student's development. According to the article, "Using Disruptive Technologies to Make Digital Connections: Stories of Media use and Digital Literacy in Secondary Classrooms," teachers must use digital resources to create student centered relationships and if the teacher is not providing feedback continuously, the impact may be minimized; therefore, the teacher should ensure prompt feedback is given[9]. Teachers are encouraged to utilize Google Docs, Remind™, or other applications to participate in dialogue with the students. "How They Talk-Two Students-Two perspectives on Literacies in the Writing classroom" explores ways in which students participate in nonacademic digital writing and demonstrates the value in promoting learning[10]. Students appreciate the immediacy of digital communication from peers and teachers and also see value in using digital tools to accomplish academic goals.

III. **Focal point two-Art and Media**

Objectives are taken from North Carolina Common Core English II Standards[11]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.7
Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums,

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[8] Morrell, Ernest, Rudy Duenas, Veronica Garcia and Jorge Lopez. *Critical Media Pedagogy: Teaching for Achievement in City Schools*. New York, NY. Teachers College Press. 165-166

[9] Nowell, S. D. (2014). Using disruptive technologies to make digital connections: Stories of media use and digital literacy in secondary classrooms. *Educational Media International, 51*(2), 109-123. doi:10.1080/09523987.2014.924661

[10] Amicucci, Ann. (2014) "How They Really Talk. Two students' Perspectives on Literacies in the Writing Classroom." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult learning* (57)6. 483-490.

[11] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

This lesson was inspired by the article, "Helping Families Connect Early Literacy with Social-Emotional Development". While the article is geared towards elementary students, the writers posit that reading is much more than saying printed words. Students need to learn to examine things they see more critically and allow themselves to take in the images[12]. If the student cannot focus on the visual or develop a vision, the reading becomes irrelevant. Students will exam several pieces of art, photos, music, and propaganda including Starry Night by Van Gogh Scream by Edvard Munch, The Flying Squirrel by John Singleton Copely, The Birth of Venus by Botticelli, photos from World War II, 9/11, Vietnam War, Maryln Monroe, and Albert Einstein as well as Dr. Seuss' Political art. Art will be uploaded via a Google Doc and shared on Google Classroom or other learning management system.

Students will be asked to examine each for a period of two minutes and to write what they see in a Google Doc. They must pay attention to the detail and note the messages the artists hoped to send in each.

Students will then be placed in groups and discuss, and they will share their notes electronically via a shared Google Document. After discussion they will write on a flip chart board the central idea or the message they believe the artists was trying to send to the viewer. Students will perform a gallery walk and review other's charts and provide feedback. They must indicate the things they saw and note if they agree or not and why.

After the gallery walk class will discuss the things that may have impacted the perception in each and why each person may have seen something different. The teacher will then

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[12] Santos, Rosa, Angel Fettig, and LaShorage Shaffer. "Helping Families Connect Early Literacy with Social-Emotional Development." *National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* 67, no. 2, 88-93. Accessed August 16, 16. : Http://www.jstor.org/stable/42731161.

make connection to literature and a person's schema as well as the importance of paying attention to detail. Students will be asked to turn and talk and discuss how perception may also impact ethical views.

Upon completion, students will participate in a Socratic seminar regarding the ethical implications of each piece of art. It will be important for students to challenge the beliefs of the people who both created the art and the people who appreciated the art. The political satire in Dr. Seuss will be especially critical to these conversations but ideally students will also note things like the objectification of women, things that fuel stereotyping in society, and the moral implications within each piece of art.

Student will then watch two modern day videos and commercial ads and discuss each person's perception of each. The teacher will ask students to determine the central idea of each, similar to the activity with the art and connect literary devices to the things they view and hear in the videos. They will also look for ethical messages or hints that may allude to the morals of the creator as well as the viewer.

The class will continue to use a technology inquiry learning based approach. As stated by Owens Hester, and Teale, in the article "Where Do You Want to Go Today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration," choice and range of new technologies are important and students need to work in tandem to understand the information resources and how they relate to tasks[13]. Students may use various forms of technology to produce a product that highlights the biggest takeaways from this lesson and they must also connect the art to literary devices learned earlier in the year, including but not limited to irony, sarcasm, allusion, juxtaposition etc. It will be important for the teacher at this point to make certain connections within each of the mediums the class has viewed:

1. Each artist has a purpose within their work

2. In order to find the person we must pay attention to the detail and examine the devices used and ask ourselves what it being accomplished through the use of the devices

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[13]   Where do you want to go From Today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration. (2002, April). *The Reading Teacher, 55*(7), 616-625

3. One detail left out or altered can change the central idea of the work

4. Therefore we have to pay attention to the detail and re-examine

5. There are ethical views that weave through every form of art/medium we view and the way in which we decipher it greatly depends upon our own ethical views

6. Art can change the way in which we see things and affect our views

IV. **Focal Point Three-Canonical Literature and Ethics**

Objectives-Derived from North Carolina Common Core[14]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5
Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

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[14] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6
Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Students will be reading *Dante's Inferno*. Before completing, the class will discuss an overview of the story and read Canto One together. Students will then be placed in groups and be asked to break down the verses and discover meaning. They must examine word choice, connotative meaning, literal meaning, and structure. After they have broken down each line and determined the meaning, they must note literary devices the author uses and why they are used. They must then determine structure and explain why they believe the author uses this structure. Once this is done, each group will be given a canto to analyze. The groups will mimic the process within their own canto and they must determine the main idea or theme of the section based on the analysis. Students will research and compare what they find online regarding their canto (including other interpretations). The text is a challenging piece and the students are encouraged to use online resources but only after the initial attempt to analyze and interpret collectively. They will need to research numerous allusions and references to historical figures.

Students will present each canto in a creative fashion to the class, using some form of technology. Students will be urged to create a movie, Vine, prezi, or Go Animate™. The students must discuss the implications of Dante and how this relates to the world today. The students should examine the ethical awareness of Dante and compare his ethical views to their own. Social, political, and social context should be considered. *Reading Between The Lines: Activities for Developing Social Awareness Literacy by Joanne Dowdy and Kenneth Kushner* encourages teachers to delve into social injustice and examine social norms through various mediums including film, socratic seminar, and author studies[15]. Examination of this complex text allows students to view the world through a familiar yet diverse lens and enables them to question ethical views that may have been espoused upon them. They should compare and contrast Dante's views to other cultural views on this particular vice.

Once all groups have completed their presentations students will discuss the work as a whole. They should discuss if/ how technology has altered anything and if Dante were to

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[15] Cushner, Kenneth, and Joanne Kilgour Dowdy. (2014). *Reading between the Lines: Activities for Developing Social Awareness Literacy*. Lanham, MD. Rowman & Littlefield

rewrite this, how it might look different. Ask students to examine the ethical views of Dante and compare to ethical views today. Encourage students to think of music videos, games, TV, Radio, magazines and if these mediums have changed the expectations on ethics. Each student will be asked to write a short reflection on the work of literature and post to their website. Students will upload their presentation to their website also and a rubric will be provided for grading. The rubric will include the following:

	Exceeds 4	Meets 3	Below satisfactory 2	Does not meet 1
Break down specific text and explain meaning				
Explain Allegory and symbolism within (as well as any lit. device) -use textual evidence				
Explain how character is evolving and explain relevance to text				
Explain structure of the text and the relevance this may have				
Contrapasso –discussion (what is it, how does this fit with everything?)				
Creative and informative presentation which everyone participates and memorizes portions (4 lines min)				
Effective teaching approach (including strong presentation skills, technology, and props)				
Social, political, and religious context is discussed thoroughly				

Ethical view comparison				

The rubric is somewhat ambiguous because the students should be encouraged to analyze and construct their own meaning. The students are not necessarily graded on a right or wrong scale, but instead on a scale that examines critical thinking and effort; however, students need a guiding requirement or map, so to speak to ensure they are focused.

V. **Focal Point Four-Creating an Ethical Argument**

North Carolina Common Core Standards[16]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6
Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1
Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

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[16] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5
Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4
Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5
Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Reiteration of Guiding Question: How does text/media/information impact our ethical views and what are the implications?

Students will discuss the various forms of text they have been exposed to in the unit and discuss the value of literacy in developing ethical views and solving ethical dilemmas. Students will be asked to imagine, if we did not have the written word, how would this impact ethics? What risks would our society have placed on us if people did not know how to read, understand, and question the text we are exposed to on a daily basis? Remind students that ethics are a reflection of morality and the morals within the world have changed-these changes have produced additional dilemmas. Students should imagine for a moment how the world might look and write a short reflection and post to their Website.

Students will then be asked to take a problem in the world that exists due to ethical decisions made by hegemonic forces and/or morality. The problem should be global in nature and one that impacts people across the world as well as one that impacts them. Students will be urged to use a problem from the novel they are reading *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, however they may use any other issue. Examples are as follows:

1. Protection of Privacy

2. Rich/ Poor Gap

3. Energy and conservation

4. Status of women

5. Peace and conflict -Racial tensions

6. Education and learning

7. Health care for the poor

The list in not exclusive and students may examine other issues; however they must as a group determine which one they wish to use. They will then complete an inquiry that will include a broad search online to determine the issues and the implications.

The purpose for this inquiry was highly influenced by the reading of *Where do you want to go today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration*, which posited that inquiry based learning combined with technology in the classroom is a viable way to improve learning and literacy[17]. Through the research, technology allowed students to inquire through various ways and see things from many perspectives. The authors note that the teacher serves as a facilitator in the process and helps students move through the process at their own pace, which can be invaluable to achieve differentiated learning. They also discovered that technology served as a remarkable cognitive tool because students were using technology to analyze, interpret, and construct meaning; technology worked as a conduit. As the research suggest, the lessons must be intentional and thus students need to have specific goals and objectives to meet as a result of any inquiry or technology based lesson.

The project will be divided into sections.

1. Determine the issue and gather as many examples of problems that have arisen due to this issue. The students should be able to find a minimum of ten. Students must save facts and citations in a Google doc.

2. Determine what has been done to address the issues as of date. Students must use credible facts. Students must save facts and citations in a Google doc.

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[17] Where do you want to go today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration. (2002, April). *The Reading Teacher, 55*(7), 616-625.

3. As a group, determine a plan to solve for the problem. In other words, what needs to happen or change in order to fix the problem?

4. Students must find literature related back to the issue and or the problem. This can include short stories, poems, movies, music, etc. Exact reference to the texts must be included.

5. Students will collectively write a MLA formatted paper using Google docs which summarizes their findings.

6. Students will create a visual and upload the paper as well as the visual on their website.

Another reason for incorporating this lesson and other lessons in this unit is based on research from "*In the Age of Analytic Reading" by* Colleen Pennell. Pennell discusses the ways in which dialogue, and a student's personal experience, can add value to understanding and interpreting text[18]. The author posits that close reading is only possible when students make personal connections and reach emotional engagement with the text they are reading. Philosophical questions should, according to the author, guide discussions and are necessary because they necessitate logical inferential thinking but also disarm traditional academic labels. The students should continuously engage in philosophical discussions and advanced inquiry. The internet and technological tools offered allow the student to be exposed to a host of other forms of information and they learn to not only process the information but to advance their own rationale based on the information they are being exposed to. Literacy is no longer about simply reading passages but it is now about analyzing, interpreting, and disseminating information from multiple sources. Students must learn how to maneuver through the information and use technology to their own advantage, and ultimately to improve society. Teachers are no longer developing memory banks but instead teaching students how to process information and remain agile; most importantly educators must develop a love for inquiry and lifelong learning agility.

VI. **Focal Point Five-Ethics, conflict, identity, and relationships**

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[18] Pennell, Colleen. "In the Age of Analytic Reading." *The Reading Teacher* 68, no. 4 (2014): 251-60. doi:10.1002/trtr.1292.

Objectives derived from North Carolina Common Core Standards[19]:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3
Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5
Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6
Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Students will be reading the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* throughout the entire semester. The goal will be to tie back each of the overarching concepts in the class to this novel and create a digital animation that will be posted on their individual websites created earlier in the class.

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[19] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

Students will be responsible for creating a Go Animate™ project that will serve as a summative (formal) assessment of their reading.

Explain to students, the project should be broken down into sections and each section will be graded on accuracy, comprehension, analysis, and thoroughness. A rubric will be provided and uploaded to file. Remind students to please review prior to initiating project. Each section will be graded and count as informal grades; however, the final product will count as a formal assessment grade. It is important to pace themselves according to the due dates and read the text nightly. Students will receive time in class to work on Go Animate; however, the majority of the reading will need to be completed outside of class.

Rubric

Section I. (Chapters 1-12) Due By Oct 3rd
1. Intro to the characters: (include traits, and relationships with one another) and explain how they develop the story. Text must be cited including page numbers.
2. Setting: Must include specifics including historical implications, historical references, and allusions. Explain the relevance to the characters and what has been learned thus far. Text must be cited.
3. Point of view
4. Key facts and summary of the chapters
5. How is the setting important? What was going on in history during this time? Why is this important for the reader to understand? Are these issues still prevalent?
6. Key terms

Section II. (Chapters 13-23) Due by Oct 17th
1. Explain new characters and how the characters have evolved
2. Explain the author's craft and structure and how it is developing the story (how have the characters changed, the setting, what events does the author explain, why? What dialogue or language is used, what style of writing does the author use? Literary elements?
3. What key terms should the reader know?
4. Key facts and summary of the chapters

Section III. (Chapters 24-34) Due by Nov.11th
1. What ethical dilemmas have arisen? What importance does this have to the story?
2. What additional historical references and allusions have occurred? Why are these significant?

3. What motifs and symbols are present from the beginning of the book to the current sections?
4. What analogies can the reader form (comparisons) to current Afghanistan/U.S.?
5. Explain the author's use of the following in the story: anthropomorphism, connotative language, denotative language, aphorism, allusions, bildungsroman, foil, juxtaposition, foreshadowing, hubris, stream of consciousness, verisimilitude. Explain the reason for using these devices and the value they add to the reader.
6. Key Facts and summary

Section IV. (Chapters 35-45) Due by Nov. 30th
1. How have the relationships changed throughout the story?
2. What messages about religion are seen throughout the story? War? Family?
3. What cultural views can we learn from in the story?
4. How are we similar to the characters? Different?
5. How are the women viewed in the story? (Consider different characters' views)
6. How did technology/media impact the people in the story? Does it impact us the same today?
7. How did financial decisions by others impact the story? What can we learn about finance and money from the characters?
8. Provide at least three examples of foreshadowing and what these events might reveal

Go Animate allows the students to analyze, synthesize, create, and produce. It will allow students to use inquiry and technology simultaneously and they will be improving their technological skills becoming savvier in digital production.

Section V. (Chapters 46-51) Due December 15th
1. Provide key facts and summary
2. Is there poetic justice in the end? For all?
3. Why do the characters return/not return to Afghanistan?
4. How does the past experiences of the characters affect decisions made by characters in the novel?
5. What life lessons can be learned through reading this novel?
6. How can we take what we have read and add value to who we are as individuals?

Students will share their videos with the class and the videos will be posted to their website by the end of the semester. Students will ideally connect literature, both informational and canonical literature, to their lives. They will grow an appreciation for

the literature as a piece of art but also as a representation of a truth they may hope to attain one day. They will learn about the world, themselves, and academic goals.

VII. **Focal Point Six-Ethics and Politics**

Objectives derived from North Carolina Common Core Standards[20]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3
Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6
Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2
Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

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[20] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Students will examine the Toulmin™ model and complete a Scavenger hunt created by the teacher in Quia. The goal will be to learn the basic tenants of an effective argument. Students will also explore rhetoric, the types of rhetoric, and how society is influenced by rhetoric. They will be asked to spend 45 minutes online and explore various sites looking for rhetorical approaches used in articles, ads, social media, and various social mediums.

They will be asked to write a post on a Google Classroom discussion board and they will be required to reply to two other students. *Investigating Pupils' Interactions Around Digital Texts: A spatial perspective on the "classroom-ness" of Digital Literacy Practices in Schools* discusses the concept of classroom-ness and posits that space is not fixed but relational[21]. The premise is online space is important and on line spaced between students can help them construct meaning. Students can gain insight into the world and improve their own learning when spaces are broadened outside of the classroom. Technology can help students come together and it can create a fluid space for learning. The students will therefore continue conversations outside of the classroom with each other and with the text in the world that inundates them via online mediums.

Students will then be asked to determine an issue in the world related to the upcoming election and consider their own ethical views, then they must write a letter to the future president using the Toulmin model which addresses this issue. Students must be succinct and adhere to letter writing principles while also using effective rhetoric and argumentative formats. Students will share their letter with one student in the classroom and they while edit each other's work. Upon completion, the student will upload their letter to their website as well as to the National Website for *Letters to the Next President.*

This unit is primarily focused on ethics and students will also delve into conflict, identity and relationships and add additional segments to their website. Upon completion of the entire semester, students will have explored global issues, finance, relationships, and a host of other topics, ultimately acquiring literacy goals. The majority of the class will be

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[21] Burnett, C. (2013). Investigating pupils' interactions around digital texts: A spatial perspective on the "classroom-ness" of digital literacy practices in schools. *Educational Review, 66*(2), 192-209. doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.768959

focused on the use of technology in both inquiry and production and prove valuable in developing well rounded learning. Students will discuss literacy and how it extends beyond the realm of reading a book and write a reflection on how they have improved their literacy skills and how they hope to continue to grow their literacy skills as lifelong learners. This will be posted to their website in the form of a letter and students will be asked to share that letter with their parents. Parents will then be asked to email their students back and copy me on their response, which will also include additional support they can give to their child to help them grown their literacy skills.

VIII. Focal Point Seven-Ethics and Finances

North Carolina Common Core Standards[22]

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7
Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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[22] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

Students rarely get the chance to discuss financial matters in a classroom unless they are learning how to add or subtract numbers or possibly fortunate enough to take a finance course. In addition, many poor ethical decisions are made all in the name of money or greed. Ask students to consider the following ethical dilemma and write a narrative about the situation. They should explain how they will utilize the money they have, what decisions they will make, and how these decisions are ethical. They must then explain the potential problems they may run into and what they would do to maintain their integrity.

Students will share their post on their website through a blog and respond to two others.

Scenario:

You just landed your first job. You are behind in your rent by 1 month ($700.00), you need money to pay for food for the first two weeks until you get paid, you need gas, and you need to pay the electrical bill for $50.00. Your best friend has also asked you to have dinner with her/him at a hip new hangout. You have nothing to wear but you really want to go because you haven't been out in months.

You have $809.00 in your bank account to last you until you get paid. Your first paycheck will be approximately $1000.00 but you will also have rent coming up again in two weeks, in addition to your phone bill of $50.00. You happen to find $100.00 in the entrance to your building in an old wallet that looks like it belongs to the elderly woman who lives two doors down and who lives off social security. You have asked your mom for money in the past but she is mad at you because you decided to quit school and she is refusing to help you until you go back to school and earn a degree.

What do you do?

Student work should demonstrate effective problem solving and inquiry. The final post should be well written, reflective, and informative and present the ethical views of the student.

IX. **Conclusion**

By the end of the unit students will have produced various forms of medium and uploaded all of their work on their digital portfolio. Each product will represent a summative assessment of the skills learned and the teacher should be able to determine mastery of the objective.

Students will be asked to look at the Common Core standards and write a reflection on what they learned about themselves, the world, academics, and technology.

The following can be assumed from successful completion of the unit as it relates to technology in the classroom as a tool for improving literacy:

- Technology can extend the classroom and the community of learners outside of the classroom walls.
- Technology can allow students to explore more than ever before.
- Technology used effectively can promote the use of cognitive skills that will naturally improve literacy.
- Technology must be used intentionally in order to promote learning but when it is, learning can reach new heights and students can transcend state test requirements.
- Technology does not replace the teacher but it does change the role slightly of the teacher to one who must facilitate and guide learning. The teacher must use it as this vehicle for learning.
- Technology combined with inquiry based learning and a flipped classroom approach is most effective.
- Technology does not remove dialogue, communication, or collaboration; it simply changes the geographies and in essence widens it.
- Technology intentionally used in and out of the classroom can promote critical thinking skills and improve literacy scores

Appendix 1

This unit is designed for English II students in the tenth grade. The standards and objectives are pulled from the North Carolina Common Core standard website[23]. While the list is non inclusive, the following captures the primary standards focused on in this lesson.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.5
Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.7
Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

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[23] "Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6
Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.5
Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7
Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3
Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6
Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Works Cited/Bibliography:

Amicucci, Ann. (2014) "How They Really Talk" Two students' Perspectives on Literacies in the Writing Classroom. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult learning* **(57)6. 483-490**
The author explores the ways in which nonacademic digital writing can promote learning and provide valuable insight into the student's' development. The research includes interviews of 177 students enrolled in first year writing courses and focuses on the student perspective. Students expressed appeal in the immediacy of digital communication as well as the relevance. One particular student within the study also indicated the importance of writing in communicative environments and expressed the value of digital tools in accomplishing this. The article posits that digital tools allowed more freedom to remain true to student identity and this in turn empowered the students so they felt free to express themselves.

Burnett, C. (2013). Investigating pupils' interactions around digital texts: A spatial perspective on the "classroom-ness" of digital literacy practices in schools. *Educational Review, 66***(2), 192-209. doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.768959**
This research explores the concept of "classroom-ness" and posits that space is not fixed but relational and they are not unitary bounded entities by the byproduct of relationships between multiple domains. The researcher continues to explain how framing interactions remains critical and explains that the technology must be used intentionally. The online spaces observed in this study proved to generate a new space in which students could construct meaning and move on to group discussion, reenactment, etc. The class in this study came together, so to speak, around a particular place on line. The children also revealed gained insights beyond the physical classroom which proved to be significant to making meaning and learning. The article focused on classroom-ness and demonstrated how this concept can help educators see that technology reflects and helps construct both the fluid and nested spaces associated with everyday learning. Classroom-ness focuses on the intersection which the educator has to consider what is included or excluded, what counts as literacy, and how different perspectives interest and ideally establish a new community of learners.

Cushner, Kenneth, and Joanne Kilgour Dowdy. (2014) *Reading between the Lines: Activities for Developing Social Awareness Literacy*. **Lanham, MD. Rowman and Littlefield**
A secondary social studies teacher at Bell High School, while battling technology in the classroom, decided to use technology as a tool instead of seeing it as a disruption. In

> **Commented [RC1]:** Full bibliographic reference needed here.

> **Commented [LMT2R1]:**

doing so, the teacher was able to leverage technology and use it as a way to strengthen relationships and assist in teaching. The qualitative teacher research study examined teachers' and students' concerns over media and digital literacies, the digital divide, and digital teacher–student relationships. Teachers were able to extend learning and relationships beyond the school through social media, online assistance and using devices as business organization tools. All teachers involved in the research study embraced technology and found that relationships grew and more learning opportunities were presented due to the addition of digital tools.

Leland, Christine, Anne Ociepka, and Kate Kuonen. "Reading From Different Interpretive Stances: In Search of a Critical Perspective." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* **55, no. 5 (2012): 428-37. doi:10.1002/jaal.00051.**
The authors explore classroom teachers who teach students to take a critical stance and they examine how this stance is not only constructed through close reading but also through social construction. The authors encourage teachers to help students to think critically and gear away from a one size fits all approach to reading and analyzation of text. Ultimately by doing so students learn to think out of the box and recognize multiple answers to problems. Taking a stance also enhances the reading process and ultimately help children to examine their own lives through the lens of others.

Morrell, Ernest, Rudy Duena, Veronica Garcia, and Jorge Lopez. (2013) *Critical Media Pedagogy: Teaching for Achievement in City Schools*. **New York, NY. Teachers College Press.**
> This book covers an array of ways teachers may and should use media in the classroom to improve engagement, address social issues, help students feel empowered, and ultimately improve learning. The book is a combination of efforts and represents actual classrooms within urban low socioeconomic settings and offers insightful examples of what a teacher can do when engaged in media within the classroom. It also uses standards based content and embraces student empowerment.

> **Commented [RC3]:** Full bibliographic reference needed here.

Pennell, Colleen. "In the Age of Analytic Reading." *The Reading Teacher* **68, no. 4 (2014): 251-60. doi:10.1002/trtr.1292.**
This article discusses the ways in which dialogue and a student's personal experience can add value to understanding and interpreting text. The authors posit that close reading is only possible when students make personal connections and reach emotional engagement with the text they are reading. Philosophical questions should, according to the authors, guide discussions and are necessary because they necessitate logical inferential thinking but also disarms traditional academic labels.

Nai-Cheng Changa, Hsuan-Yu HsubA. Study on Integrating Problem-based Learning into the Innovative Teaching in Information Literacy and Ethics *Journal of Educational Media & Library Sciences*. **53(2) DOI:10.6120/JoEMLS.2016.532/0010.**

The research examined the benefits of a problem based learning environment and compared a flipped classroom to an online classroom using 95 students (49 flipped/46 online). In addition to observing student performance, online questionnaire and interviews were used to extend the researchers initial research and examine the problem based learning approach. The online groups exhibited better engagement and better performance than the flipped classroom, and had easier challenges to overcome; however the flipped classroom exhibited higher class average scores. They posit the use of a blended flipped online learning approach as it will present the best learning outcomes.

Nowell, S. D. (2014). Using disruptive technologies to make digital connections: Stories of media use and digital literacy in secondary classrooms. *Educational Media International, 51***(2), 109-123. doi:10.1080/09523987.2014.924661**

This article explores the idea of extending learning outside of the classroom and furthering the relationships with students through social media and other technologies. As a result students are more engaged and work harder, and become more vested.

Owens, Roxanne, Jennifer Hester, and William Teale. "Where Do You Want to Go Today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration." *The Reading Teacher* **55, no. 7 (April 2002): 617-24. https://www.luminpdf.com/viewer/cBewmf6aiabrT5La6.**

In this article the authors describe two projects that utilized inquiry into urban educational settings and then offer practical considerations to other teachers for employing technology in the classroom.

"Read the Standards." Read the Standards | Common Core State Standards Initiative. Accessed November 20, 2016. http://www.corestandards.org/read-the-standards/.

North Carolina Common Standards broken down for educators.

Santos, Rosa, Angel Fettig, and LaShorage Shaffer. "Helping Families Connect Early Literacy with Social-Emotional Development." *National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* **67, no. 2, 88-93. Accessed August 16, 16. : Http://www.jstor.org/stable/42731161.**

Authors examine essential components of developing early language and literacy. This article is geared towards early educators but provides additional insight into education and engagement for all students. Literacy based activities are discussed for both in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

"The NCTE Definition of 21st Century Literacies." *NCTE Comprehensive News***. Web. 03 June 2016.**

The National Council of English Teachers is devoted to the teaching and learning of English and therefore it serves as a valuable and necessary addition to my research. NCTE believes the English classroom is the place all students and can should be able to develop their own voice. They have a right to hear others and explore opinions and become effective participants in the world. This is only strengthened through the power of understanding language and understanding the power of literature.

"US Digital Literacy." *US Digital Literacy***. Web. 03 June 2016.**

"Technology must be like oxygen: ubiquitous, necessary, and invisible." This quote by Chris Lehman, a Principal of Science Leadership Academy, represents the very essence of my research. Technology must be found everywhere; it is necessary and yet it is invisible. It is with form, and yet it is without form; it must become like oxygen in the classrooms of America today. This website offers insightful research and ideas from other educators and the underlying philosophy is that technology doesn't change what we teach, only how we teach.

Where do you want to go today? Inquiry Based Learning and Technology Integration. (2002, April). *The Reading Teacher, 55***(7), 616-625.**

In this article technology and inquiry learning were used in two inquiry projects. The authors discussed what they learned and practical ways for incorporating both inquiry based learning and technology into the classroom as ways to improve learning and

literacy. The authors posit that inquiry based learning is a requirement in today's urban school setting due to the demands placed on both student and teacher and believe it can play a valuable role in learning. Inquiry not only satisfies curiosity for students but helps them feel empowered and puts them in a position of responsibility for their learning. Through the research, technology allowed students to inquire through various ways and see things from many perspectives. The authors note that the teacher serves as a facilitator in the process and helps students move through the process at their own pace, which can be invaluable to achieve differentiated learning. They also discovered that technology served as a remarkable cognitive tool because students were using technology to analyze, interpret, and construct meaning; technology worked as a conduit. Their research reinforced the notion that technology also provides a way for students to think differently about school. The research also however enforced the notion that intentional lessons must be made and teachers must facilitate effectively in order to avoid the rabbit hole technology can sometimes bring. The authors also reinforce the need to help students to learn what is objective versus subjective and what is deemed as credible on line, in order to avoid additional pitfalls.