Recognition of the Power of Stereotypical Images of African Americans in Media

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
High School English core curriculum classes as well as English and Social Studies
Elective courses

Keywords: (media, minorities, stereotypes, racism)

Teaching Standards: See Appendix 1 for teaching standards addressed in this unit.
(Insert a hyperlink to Appendix 1 where you've stated your unit's main standards. For
directions on how to insert a hyperlink, see Fellows Handbook, p. 27.)

Synopsis:

This unit will focus on how stereotypes influence society. Students will be able to
identify stereotypes in various mediated systems. Through critical analysis of images in
the media, students will be able to recognize the power that these images have in
shaping perception. Students will also be introduced to how schemas develop as a result
of reinforced repetition of stereotypes. Racial stereotyping of African-Americans in the
media has a deepr history that is rooted in the desire to suppress the African-American
voice. Stereotyping has been used as a weapon by the dominant culture in various
forms of media including literature. And the repetition of viewing these negative
images have had an impact on society and culture. Students will be introduced to the
history of stereotyping African-Americans in film and defining stereotypes. Students
will identify stereotypes and then explore the negative effects of racial stereotyping
today.

I plan to teach this unit in the Spring 2018 semester to 26 students in Journalism class,
26 students in Creative Writing class and 28 students in Film as Literature class.

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

Overview

I took a course called African-Americans in the Media when I was in college and it was extremely enlightening. I learned so much more about American History and the influence of dominant society on our culture. The course focused on how stereotypes of African-Americans were presented to the world as "real images," therefore people believed what they viewed. I learned about how these images were still being presented in modern day although sometimes cloaked in a different garment.

Today, many students are not informed about the history of African-Americans in society and very often the story of African-American contributions are omitted from textbooks. Students may know that stereotypes exist, but may not have a substantial understanding of the historical context for the various characters on present day television. Awareness of the evolution of stereotypes of African-Americans in media could provide students with a more informed process for the choices they make in television consumption. It could also inspire them to affect change in society and activate their social activism.

This unit will be designed for English elective courses. This would include journalism, creative writing, and film as literature. Students in these electives are a mix of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

The curriculum for the English electives is flexible enough to be able to add additional units and explore variations on teaching current lessons. Although the emphasis in the electives is on content knowledge, I've built curriculum that supports English common core standards. This "Media Literacy" unit will incorporate a focus on African-American stereotypes in the media. It will be a two-week unit that will focus on research, writing, and developing a final product. It can be used for creative writing, journalism, and film as literature courses.

School / Student Demographics

The student population at West Charlotte High School is 1,696. The district average is 1,486. Over the course of the school year I will teach roughly 180-200 students. Our school is comprised of over 85% African-American, 1% White, 5% Asian, 5% Hispanic, 1 % other. The school is comprised of about 82.2% economically disadvantaged students. My English elective classrooms are almost 100% African-American. Many of students deal with exceptional challenges on and off campus which interferes with their interest, motivation and desire to much more than just pass the class. So engaging my students beyond the physical text is extremely vital for their success in the classroom. They need to be able to make real life connections to the materials.

This is my third year teaching English in the high school classroom environment. One of the biggest challenges at West Charlotte High School is classroom behavior. Behavior management in the classroom can sometimes trump the learning that a teacher would like to take place. Through the many professional development opportunities I have taken advantage of, I have been able to apply many strategies to pull students back into the fold and engage them in exciting ways. My students are also at varying levels of development. Some have learning

disabilities, or other obstacles that don't allow them to fully comprehend the lesson. The graduation rate at West Charlotte has risen to almost 90%. However, many of our senior scholars are graduating ill equipped to be successful in the technologically advanced 21st century. They are graduating with weak writing skills, poor critical thinking skills and ineffective persuasive skills to compete in the global marketplace.

Rationale

It wasn't until I was in college that I was introduced to African-American studies. Since then it has been an important aspect of my personal growth. I believe connecting to your history is very important. My elementary and secondary schools did not incorporate fiction that reflected my heritage. My parents and family filled in the gaps and provided a strong foundation that helped me make sense of the world.

When I started teaching at West Charlotte High School, I realized that I would be teaching the British Literature course for senior students. I was surprised that the curriculum did not include those cultural connections vital for a demographic of 85 % African-Americans to be able to connect to their African culture. I was able to use the novel *Things Fall Apart* by Chenua Achebe to bridge a connection of African culture and British Literature.

I am always looking to incorporate ways to connect students to material in a personal way so therefore I have chosen to include a Media Literacy Unit that includes a focus on African-American stereotypes. Students will identity stereotypes, research, write, and present their findings. I believe this would be a great way to support students in the English Department as a whole.

As an alumnus of Teach for America, I participated in an array of professional development designed to address many of those gaps in educational equity and cultural relevant pedagogy that supports student learning. So when I arrived in the classroom I immediately started to develop ways to incorporate ways for students to make connections between the materials and their own lives. My professional development with PEAK learning systems also introduced strategies for engaging unmotivated students in the classroom using connections.

This unit is important for my students because media has a tremendous influence on our decisions and how we view the world. Walter Lippmann introduces the idea of stereotype in his book, "Public Opinion." In the introduction of the book, he tells the story of French men and English men living on an island together for several weeks who had no idea that back on the mainland, their prospective countries were at war. They received their messages through a trusted source who delivered messages in 60-day intervals. When the messenger was late, they relied on the last information they'd received and stayed in that space of knowledge until the messenger arrived again. So, it wasn't until they heard the news of the turmoil on the mainland that they realized they were in fact, enemies. Lippmann describes the men as "trusting" the picture in their heads. Lippmann also goes on to explain how we fill in the picture in our heads through stereotypes because we have attributed a trait to a person because we are told about things before we experience them.

This is an important unit for students because it will allow them to recognize how stereotypes are formed, understand how media consumption influences public opinion, and provide a context for critically analyzing the media they consume.

I am always trying to find ways to engage the students in the classroom. One of my goals is to give students more ownership of their assignments and how they are assessed. Many students enjoy hands-on assignments, while others want to use technology. Some students are motivated by getting good grades, while others may need different stimulation for engaging in the material. Students in the past have expressed excitement when I showed an interactive video of the Transatlantic slave trade and we discuss how the authors who wrote during those times were influenced by what was happening. They are making connections with the material relating to today's authors, poets, and musicians are writing through the lens of social justice. My plan for this Unit on African-American Stereotypes is that the students will make compassionate connections that they would want to explore beyond the classroom and that they would want to share with others to help the people around them make more informed choices about the media they consume.

Objective

This unit will be designed for High School English Language Arts(ELA) elective classes; Creative Writing, Journalism, and Film as Literature. It is designed to help support students' writing and analytical skills. Students will be able to identify negative African-American stereotypes in the media, understand media literacy, understand the history of African-American in films, utilize research and writing skills. Incorporating projects that require technology will enhance 21st century learning skills as well.

The 9th-12th grade students are enrolled in the high school ELA classes together. So, this unit will have a centralized objective, however, it may need to be differentiated within it to accommodate for the varying levels of student skill and ability. Each elective has a different focus, but this unit will be incorporated into each class' curriculum to support student growth in areas of writing, presentation skills, and critical analysis of media.

This unit will be under the umbrella of "Media Literacy," with a focus on developing student critical analysis skills of stereotypes in media (focusing on African-Americans). Students will be encouraged to review their media intake to become active viewers. This will allow them to make connections with the materials and monitor their reactions. Students will be able to define media literacy and apply those concepts to movies, books, advertisements, news, etc…

Then students will begin to critically analyze the influence of media on society through evaluation of those media sources. At the end of the unit students will present a final project which could be a children's book, television script, or commercial advertisement for Creative Writing; a short film for Film as Literature; and a mini-documentary for Journalism.

Content Research

        Students will need to acquire a broad understanding of African-American history prior to diving into understanding the origin of negative African-American stereotypes in media. Before they are able to fully appreciate the complexity of how these stereotypes influence attitudes and behavior in the society it is important for them to look at how the stereotype evolved. Henry Louis Gates, Jr discusses African American history in his book "Life Upon These Shores." This book explores visual images including posters, cartoons, and photographs as well as provides background information for the historical events that help shape ideology and sentiment toward African-Americans in the United States. African-American history is robustly broad, and this unit will need to focus specifically on the elements of African-American history in the context of what may have been omitted from the historical accounts, textbooks and other non-fiction works. It will need to focus even more specifically on the images and references to African-American images presented in images, posters, cartoons, and photographs. This would provide support for understanding the basis of the stereotype. As students are introduced to these images they are also gaining information about the origin of the ideology of the "stereotype."

        Walter Lippmann's book Public Opinion introduces the concept of the stereotype and explains how public opinion is formed and manipulated because of what we trust as an "authentic messenger." Our authentic messenger today is in the form of media. Students spend so much of their time on social media. The messages they consume through this medium are powerful. When you look at the impact that the ALS Ice Bucket challenge had on fundraising for the ALS foundation as well as global awareness, it's not hard to deny the effects of social media. Today, many people get their information from second-hand sources and Lippmann talks about how people are aroused by a mental image of the event. Their indirect experience is trustworthy enough for them to believe what they see or hear through the medium. Opinion leaders play a large part in helping to construct and reinforce messages, thereby becoming an authentic messenger. NBC Newsreader Brian Williams delivered news daily to viewers as a trusted source of information. When viewers became aware of his telling untrue stories about his personal experience, they were surprised and even the media outlet removed him from the airwaves. However, he has since returned to his post as a messenger of information. What does this say about the people who are in power to present the public with authentic messengers?

        As the line is blurred between trusted and non-trusted persons to create and present these images and information to the public, consumerism of stereotypes in the media continues to be what drives sales for corporations. The Ethnic Notions documentary explores the dominant stereotypes that have informed much of the negative image portrayals of African-Americans seen on screen. The documentary deconstructs the origins of these stereotypes and provides an evolutionary tale using the earliest references of the stereotype to modern day depictions. Scholars, researchers and experts explore the effects of the negative stereotypes on race relations and their perceived consequences on society.

Introducing media theories to students will reinforce concepts they are learning in this unit. Applying the "gaze vs. voice" to media theory relates to what one sees and determines about a person before ever hearing their voice or their story of who they truly are. As students journal about their media consumption and monitor their viewing habits, they will gain awareness about the impact racial stereotyping has had on their own lives. They will also recognize that the people who control the message and dissemination of the messages hold the power to create whatever they want. They have the power to create and reinforce the images they produce, both positive and negative. This power can be subtle or overt and has the potential to start influencing behaviors and dispositions at a young age. As children grow up seeing the same negative images over and over they begin to internalize them and they become a part of their schema. Social identity theory aims to explain how people identify themselves.

Dana Mastro, of the University of California, Santa Barbara explains the importance of the media, in her article, "Why the Media's Role in Issues of Race and Ethnicity Should be in the Spotlight." Although a myriad of factors is known to contribute to racial/ethnic positions, for many, conceptualizations of race and ethnicity as well as interracial/interethnic dynamics are defined (at least in part) by the characterizations presented in the mass media—including both news and entertainment offerings (Mastro, 2015). Mastro also claims that through both short term and long-term exposure, media characterizations are reinforced and can influence the development of social identities. In my household, we practice selective avoidance. There is deliberate and informed decisions about our viewing menu. If one's group faces persistently unfavorable characterizations (as is the case for many racial/ethnic groups), then selections must be more carefully considered – and media avoidance must also figure heavily into the process (Abrams & Giles, 2007).

Students will be introduced to the major negative stereotype images for African-Americans. Donald Bogle's book "Toms, coons, mulattoes, mammies, and bucks; an interpretive history of Blacks in American films," explores the concept of these images used in the past and today in modern films. The tom is always faithful to the white master, the coon is unreliable, lazy and subhuman, the mammie is fat, boisterous, and can often be described as a female version of the coon, the tragic mulatto is made to be more likable because of her mixed heritage, the buck is big, brutal, and oversexed. I will use excerpts from films to illustrate various negative stereotypes. Films clips will include: Gone With The Wind(1939), Birth of a Nation (Cleopatra(1963), Gods of Egypt (2016), Superfly (1972), The Toy (1982), Song of the South (1947), Driving Miss Daisy (1989), Bebe's Kids (1992), The Green Mile (1999), Madea's Family Reunion (2006). Recognizing that these stereotypes still exist in various forms, students will be asked to record reflections in their own journals about their own experience with these stereotypes. Questions about how seeing these depictions make you feel and are they still offensive today? Students are exposed to so many messages from a variety of sources they may not be in tune to critically analyze the media around them. However, as they become more alert

and aware of the power of the messages, they will begin to apply critical analysis of these messages regardless of the medium.

As a high school educator, I see the direct effects of students taking on a persona of something they have been exposed to through the media. Very often they comment on how their choice of dress is something they decided to do on their own. They believe they are in charge of their own thoughts void of interference or influence, not realizing the power that the media has had on them from the moment they became aware of themselves. It's important for students to develop critical thinking skills and understand how media messages shape our culture and society. According to Jim Macnamara, author of "Journalism and PR: unpacking 'spin', stereotypes and media myths," he states that 50-80 per cent of the content of mass media is significantly shaped by PR. And as social media continues to grow, new opportunities to influence the public emerge. Farhad Manjoo's New York Times Article, "Tech's Frightful Five" explores the power that Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Microsoft and Alphabet, the parent company of Google has over culture and information. They are collectively worth trillions of dollars and continue to grow. So, whereas students believe that their vision of the world remains autonomous, they will soon learn through research about the power of constructed images. They will recognize how public opinion is informed through media and how the mediated messages can embed images that represent an imagined or perceived concept.

Students will gain a critical understanding of how application of negative stereotypes have been set through agenda-setting from the people in power. Through research of African-American depictions and creation of their own media they will develop an intimate relationship with identifying, understanding, analyzing, and evaluating these stereotypes and the role they play in influencing mindsets.

Teaching Strategies

The overall plan for the unit will be for students to actively engage in learning about media stereotypes through readings, writings, viewing various mediums, Socratic seminars, and interactive activities. It is a 14-day unit. The unit is divided into three parts. Section 1 focuses on defining media literacy, and identifying stereotypes. Section 2 focuses on research and writing. Section 3 focuses on creating a product that demonstrates understanding of the power that using stereotypes in the media has on our values and ideas.

Section 1:
    I.   *Defining Media Literacy* -Students will be able to define media literacy.
Over the course of two days students will watch Media Literacy in the 21st Century Classroom(© Carmelina Films) through Films of Demand and respond to questions to check for understanding. (**Appendix 1. Defining Media Literacy Worksheet**)
        a. Students will participate in discussion groups to discuss the topic of media literacy.
        b. Students will complete the worksheet in response to the video.

    II.   *History of African-Americans in Film* - Students will be able to understand the history of African-Americans in film.
Over the course of three days, students will learn about the history of African-Americans in Films. Using films and books, students will create a timeline of African-Americans in film. The timeline will include notable and specific milestone for African-Americans in media.
        a. Students will participate in turn-and-talk discussions about milestones in African-American film. They will complete a guided notes worksheet. (**Appendix 2. History of African-Americans in Film Guided Notes worksheet**)
        b. Students will create a timeline of notable, specific milestones for African-Americans in the media. This will be a colorful hands-on-project that helps student tap into their creativity. The final project is to be displayed in or around the classroom.

    III.   *Identifying African-American Stereotypes in Film*- Students will be able to identify five major negative African-American stereotypes of African-Americans in film: The tom, coon, mulattoes, mammies, and bucks.
Over the course of three days students will explore stereotypes of African-Americans. The first lesson is designed to understand the definition of the stereotype, origin of the concept of a stereotype, and how it applies to the media industry.
        a. Students will record the definition of stereotype, and explain how it applies to media
        b. Students will read the introduction from Walter Lippmann's "Public Opinion" and write a summary.
        c. Students will read excerpts from "Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks" by Donald Bogle and write a summary for each of the 5 major negative stereotypes discussed. They will type it into a google slide and find a picture online to accompany their summary.

The second lesson will be identifying the major stereotypes that exist in the media pertaining to African-Americans. Various photo images will be presented to students i.e. – Shaft, Madea, Big Momma, Klumps, Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, etc…

d. Students will review the introduction of the documentary "Ethnic Notions" and have turn & talk discussions as well as a fishbowl discussion about how stereotypes are still present today. EQ1: How do these images still exist today? EQ2: Do you believe these images are influential?

e. Students will watch video-TCM Race & Hollywood: Gone With the Wind) which will provide context for the characterization of the "mammy" character.

f. Students will look at old vs. modern movie clips and identify similarities/differences in portrayals of African-Americans stereotype.
  a. The Mammy
    i. Clip#1 -Gone with the Wind – Hattie McDaniel
    ii. Clip#2 -The Help – Viola Davis

g. **Assessment:** Socratic Seminar demonstrating their understanding of the influence of stereotypes in programs.

h. **Assessment:** Five question assessment. (**Appendix 3. Five Question Short Answer Quiz**)

During this section in the unit, students would monitor their media consumption and implement active viewing strategies when watching a film or television program. While watching the program they will monitor their reactions, make connections, predictions, and inferences. Students will reflect on the stereotypes within the program. They will reflect on how those messages reflect values, shape understanding, and affect public opinion. At the end of this section, students will engage in a Socratic seminar demonstrating their understanding of the influence of stereotypes in programs.

Section 2 –
  I.   Research
Over the course of three days, students will research a negative African-American stereotype in film from one of the 5 major types. They will write a 5-paragraph essay on that particular negative African-American stereotype. (**Appendix 4. Essay Writing Template**)

a. Students will research their chosen negative African-American stereotype using at least three different sources. They will write a five-paragraph essay using topic sentences, evidence, and transition phrases. It will have an introduction and conclusion.

b. The essay writing will be scaffolded over the course of 3 days.
  a. Day 1 -Develop the thesis and introduction. Students will create an introduction with an attention grabber topic sentence and thesis statement. Develop the topic sentence for the first paragraph using the thesis statement, and five to seven sentences of supporting evidence to create the paragraph.
  b. Day 2: Develop the topic sentence for the three body paragraphs using the thesis statement, and five to seven sentences of supporting evidence to create the paragraph.

   c. Day 3: Develop the topic sentence and conclusion paragraph using the thesis statement, and five to seven sentences of supporting evidence to create the paragraph.

   d. Day 4: Peer Edit – students will engage in peer editing according to the rubric and questions. (**Appendix 5. Peer Edit Template**)

II. *Research Cube – "The Informational Cube"*

Over the course of 3 days students will create a research cube. Students will decorate a 12"x12"x12" cube on their research topic. These should be creatively crafted to draw attention, colorful, and engaging on each side. Each side of the cube will include one of the following: (**Appendix 6. Cube Example**)

 a. Side One {Photo}: A color photo and description of the stereotype addressed in the essay.

 b. Side Two {Introduction}: Introduction paragraph from your essay. (explanation of the stereotype)

 c. Side Three {Comparison/Contrast}: Provide viewers with a comparison/contrast of older portrayals versus modern day portrayals. (using both images and words)

 d. Side Four {Quote Wall}: What were people saying about these portrayals? What are they saying today? (use quote and attribution)

 e. Side Five {Famous Depictions} Collage of photos of the famous depictions of your chosen stereotype.

 f. Side Six {Effects} What effect does this stereotype have on society today?

Section 3-

III. *Presentation of Ideas*

Over the course of five days, students will create a product that represents their knowledge acquisition of African-American stereotypes in the media.

 a. Creative writing student options:

   a. Students will create and present free-verse poems exploring negative African-American stereotypes. They can perform live or they can record their poems with music and/or video images.

   b. Students will create a storybook for children

 b. Film as Literature & Journalism student options:

   a. Students will produce a mini-documentary (5-7 minutes) exploring negative African-American stereotypes.

   b. Students can create informational slideshow exploring negative African-American stereotypes.

Activities to Support Lesson Plan.
Students are introduced to media literacy this unit at the end of the course.
Defining Stereotypes

1. Students will be able to define stereotype and identify negative stereotypes. Using films, movies, television, and text students will be introduced to the study of negative African-American stereotypes.
2. Students will be provided with the vocabulary to support their understanding of media literacy. They will interact with the vocabulary through shared activities and project-based assessments.
3. Students will monitor their viewing so they can make connections, predictions, inferences, and compare and contrast different works. Students can use news, television programs and movies to explore their media consumption.
4. Gallery Walk: I will place blank chart paper on the walls with different ethnicities identified at the top. Students will walk around to each poster and write the stereotypes associated with them. OR groups of students will be at a poster that has four different ethnicities written on them and that group has to identity five stereotypes for each group then organize them most to least popular representations.
5. Check for understanding: Students will take a quiz on vocabulary, content knowledge and the most commonly used negative stereotypes of African-Americans (coon, Uncle Tom, Cammie, tragic mulatto, buck, sambo)

Recognizing the Effects of Negative Stereotypes

1. Students will analyze racially biased images in current media – students will watch cartoons from the 1950s and look at advertisements from the times to compare them to what we see today.
2. Students will read excerpts from the Movie "The Color Purple" and read about Alice Walker. They will watch the scene from the book and compare/contrast the mediums. Then they will analyze the author's purpose. (Other films to explore with this activity – TBD – Spike Lee's Bamboozled)
3. I will have students compare and contrast books by different authors and movies by different directors. This activity explores the author's or director's purpose.
4. Using a short film or movie, students will engage in a Socratic seminar which will support their skills in listening, speaking, and vocabulary acquisition.
5. Check for understanding: I will use a rubric to evaluate critical analysis skills

Research and Presentation

Research – Students will choose a commonly used negative African-American stereotype and research that subject. Students will write a 5-paragraph essay with an introduction, conclusion and three body paragraphs. Each paragraph will have a topic sentence with support structure. A guided worksheet will help support students. They will also have a peer review session where they will share their essay with a partner and discuss strengths and areas where they need to grow. Emphasis for this essay is content and organization.

Peer Edit/Revise Essay

Students will share their essay on Google Drive Platform where they can make comments, suggest changes and edit work where appropriate. Each student will complete a peer review form for the essay. Students will switch essays with another student and complete a peer review form.

Socratic Seminar

Students will conduct a Socratic Seminar

Vocabulary Support Practice

Students will also create Frayer models using Google Slides or PowerPoint with their vocabulary words. Each student will illustrate their word, write a sentence for the word, and explain a connection they have with that word. The slides will resource of information that will be located in their google classroom.

Defining Media Literacy- Worksheet

Respond to the following questions based on our viewing of "Defining Media Literacy"

1. What is media literacy?	
2. How do we access media?	
3. What is a benefit of analyzing media?	
4. How do you evaluate media messages?	
5. What is the benefit to creating your own media?	
6. Why is media literacy important?	
7. What is the head fake?	
8. Why is it important to evaluate information you get from online sources?	
9. What are examples of media that have obvious bias?	
10. What are examples of media that have non-obvious bias?	
11. How can you analyze media?	
12. What does it mean to say "all media messages are constructed?"	
13. What techniques are used to attract our attention to the message?	
14. Explain how all media have a purpose.	

15. All media messages contain at least two types of values ad two types of point of view. Explain what they are.	
16. How might people understand the message differently from me?	
17. How do messages influence my perspective on the world?	
18. Why would continuous exposure to media messages influence our perspective?	
19. How does the media teach us about our own culture without us even knowing?	
20. What kind of media do you use on a daily basis?	

Appendix 2. History of African-Americans in Film Guided Notes worksheet

1. Why didn't black actors get the recognition they deserved?

2. What is an example of a stereotype that a minority was portrayed as?

3. How were black actors portrayed?

4. What was the response from the black community to the constant representation of blacks

    as stereotypes?

5. Blacks were only allowed to view movies from what location?

6. Why do you think filmmakers used all black casts?

7. What is blackface?

8. How was the depiction of black people on the screen?

9. Why were people upset about Stepin Fetchit's characters?

10. What is the mammy character? Why do you think she is so controversial?

11. Why was Sidney Poitier such an important figure in black cinema?

12. Why do you think Amos & Andy was so popular?

13. What does it mean to "pass" as a black actor?

14. How did black cinema change in the 70s?

15. What is a black exploitation film?

Appendix 3. Five Question Quiz-

1. Why are stereotypes of African-Americans so controversial?

2. What are some of the ways African-American directors are trying to do to change challenge negative stereotypes?

3. How have stereotypes evolved? Provide an example of a negative stereotype that has changed?

4. Which depiction most disturbs you and why?

5. Explain two effects of negative stereotypes of African-Americans on culture.

Appendix 4. *Essay Writing Template*

Name_____

Five Paragraph Essay Template

Topic_____
       (What my Essay is about)

Paragraph #1

Attention Grabber (question, or interesting statement)_____
_____

Thesis statement / Your claim(What you want to prove)_____
_____

Three topics about your thesis statement (paragraph topic sentences)

#1_____
#2_____
#3_____

Paragraph #2	**Paragraph #3**	**Paragraph #4**
Details, facts, examples, quotes, story or personal experience to support topic #1 above.	Details, facts, examples, quotes, story or personal experience to support topic #2 above.	Details, facts, examples, quotes, story or personal experience to Support topic #3 above.

Paragraph #5
Conclusion
This paragraph ties up any looses ends. It restates of your thesis and closes essay.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 5. *Peer Edit/Revise Essay*
Students will share their essay on Google Drive Platform where they can make comments, suggest changes and edit work where appropriate. Each student will complete a peer review form for the essay. Students will switch essays with another student and complete a peer review form.

**PEER REVIEW FORM on Google Classroom**

Directions: You must answer in complete sentences and answer every part of the question. Make sure you provide explanations for evaluations. You can also provide suggestions and constructive criticism, if you are confused about elements of their essay. The boxes expand as you type into them. You are not limited in your space.

Your Name	
Student You Reviewed	
Introduction:	
Introduction has attention-grabbing opening.	
Introduction has a thesis statement. (debatable)	
Introduction Previews Main Points	
Introduction paragraph includes transition into the body of the essay.	
What are the strongest elements of the introduction?	
What are the weakest elements of the introduction?	
Paragraph 1:	
Paragraph has clear topic sentence that relates to thesis.	
Paragraph contains sentences that support the topic sentence.	
Body Paragraph 2:	

Paragraph has clear topic sentence that relates to thesis.	
Paragraph contains sentences that support the topic sentence.	
Body Paragraph 3:	
Paragraph has clear topic sentence that relates to thesis.	
Paragraph contains sentences that support the topic sentence.	
Conclusion Paragraph:	
Conclusion has attention-grabbing closing.	
Conclusion restates the thesis statement. (debatable)	
Conclusion ties up loose ends that brings main points to a close.	
What are the strongest elements of the conclusion?	
What are the weakest elements of the conclusion?	
ORGANIZATION: Is the essay organized and follows a flow of ideas? Provide two examples from the essay that demonstrates clear transitions between ideas.	
Example 1:	
Example 2:	
CREATIVITY: Does the essay contain creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment? Provide an example of creativity from the essay.	

What examples of figurative language does the writer use in this essay? Provide two examples from this essay.	
Example 1:	
Example 2:	
MECHANICS: Does the story contain errors in grammar, usage or mechanics? Identify at least three (3) examples and how to fix them.	
Example 1:	
Example 2:	
Example 3:	
REQUIREMENTS: Does the essay follow the requirements: (typed, double-spaced, 3-6 pages, 12 pt Times New Roman, indented paragraphs) Identify what needs to change.	
What changes do you suggest?	
Comments/ Suggestions	

Appendix 6. *Infocube example*
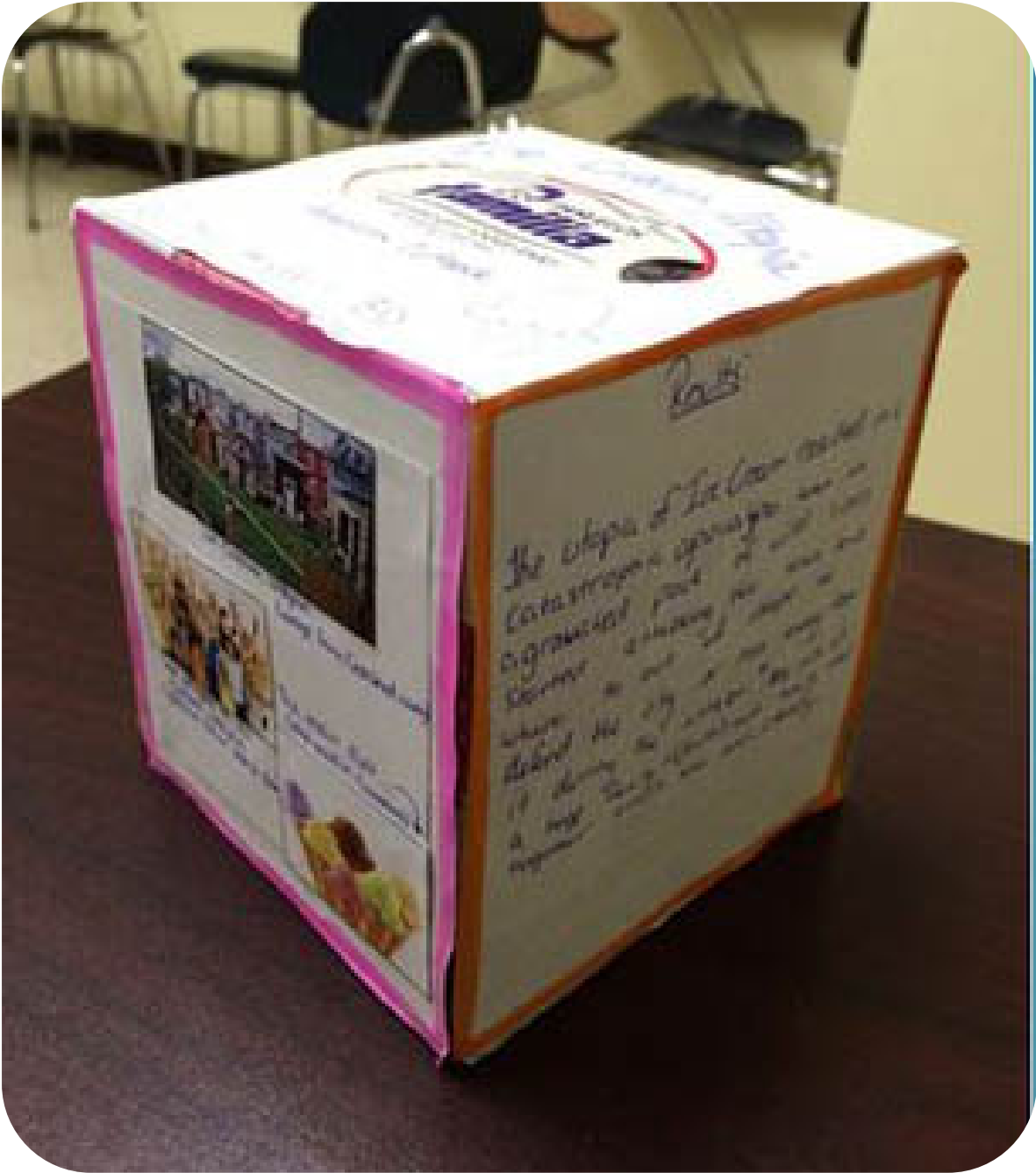
Appendix 7. Teaching Standards

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction sets the common core standards for English. Although the English electives do not participate in common core curriculum testing, I've aligned standards to the unit to support students overall. The objective is to produce college and career ready students who are prepared to enter college and workforce training programs. Critical analysis is an essential part of their foundation. This unit will continue to build on the foundational reading, and writing skills students have acquired throughout their grade levels. According to the curriculum, writing logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence is the base construct for the common core writing standards. Reading informational texts and being able to extract relevant information to support your response to a question is also a key component of the English common core curriculum. The unit will however focus on the standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2
Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.2
Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3
Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Craft and Structure:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5
Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6
Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7
Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.8
Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.9
Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.10
By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Bibliography

Abrams, J., & Giles, H. (2007). Ethnic identity gratifications selection and avoidance by African Americans: A group vitality and social identity perspective. Media Psychology, 9, 115–134.doi:10.1080/15213260709336805.
This resource explains how people actively choose to avoid certain media and how that also plays an important role in maintaining perceptions and subjective vitality of racial and ethnic group identity.

Bogle, Donald. 2001. Primetime blues: African Americans on network television. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Students can use this resource to trace the timeline of African-Americans in media. It will also provide context specifically for students looking at the milestones of African-American images constructed in the media.

Bogle, Donald. 1973. Toms, coons, mulattoes, mammies, and bucks; an interpretive history of Blacks in American films. New York: Viking Press.
This resource will be used to identify the dominant negative stereotypes used in media to depict African-Americans. It also follows the evolution of the stereotypes as they have undergone various treatments to be updated or altered as the cultural climate has changed.

Gates, Henry Louis. 2011. Life upon these shores: looking at African American history, 1513-2008. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
This text will provide context for students. It contains significant milestones of African-Americans, and defining events that directly affected the trajectory of African-Americans in the United States.

Manjoo, Farhad. "Tech's Frightful Five: They've Got Us." *The New York Times,* May 10, 2017.
This article highlights the effects of media conglomerates on our decisions. It also demonstrates the power that is in the hands of just a very few decision makers who can define everything from political policy and agendas, to news and information.

Mastro, D. (2015), Why the Media's Role in Issues of Race and Ethnicity Should be in the Spotlight. Journal of Social Issues, 71: 1–16. doi:10.1111/josi.12093
Explores and examines social identity theory. This resource will be helpful for setting a foundation for understanding how the choices in media consumption affects social identity. It explores how we develop a sense of self though media.

Media Literacy in the 21st-Century Classroom. 2009. Accessed November 4, 2017.
https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=242461&xtid=41372.
The video is broken down into segmented parts and introduce students to the concept of media literacy. It defines media literacy, explains how to analyze and evaluate media.

Riggs, Marlon T., and Esther Rolle. 2012. *Ethnic notions*. New York, N.Y.: Films Media Group.
http://digital.films.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?aid=27679&xtid=49775.
It explores the history of media's use of stereotypes in the historical context of politics, economics and the social climate of America. Through historical footage, interviews from scholars and social researchers, this video explains the origin of the stereotypes and how they are still used today.