



What is Normal for Me, May Not be Normal for You: Making Connections with Fictional Characters with Disabilities and Informational Text.

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This curriculum unit is recommended for Sixth, seventh, and eighth grades for English/Language Arts

Keywords: Human Rights Act, Equal Rights Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, disabilities, Flip Grid, Newsela, informational text, SOAPSTone, “Raymond’s Run,” “The Scarlet Ibis”

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

Synopsis: This curriculum will be used to help students to analyze a variety of informational texts. It will also use fictional texts to help the students make connections to the informational texts. Students will share their findings with other classmates and hopefully the school. Students will create a CNN type of newscast based off their research and analyze of informational text.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 120 students in seventh grade Honors and Standard Plus English/Language Arts.

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Introduction

Rationale

First off, I just want to saying that I am not a science teacher, but I do have a learner's respect for science. I find it so interesting on how our bodies develop and minds develop that being the only English/ Language Arts person in the seminar is not a problem because we are all learning how a human is developed and what it means to be human. At our very first seminar meeting, we were asked to bring a definition of what does human mean. To be frank, I did not have a definition. I never thought of defining the word human in my life! However, I did want to know what and who would be considered a human. I have two reasons why I was thinking about more of the who than of the what: 1. I have a nephew who has Down's syndrome and many people do not consider people like him to be an independent human being and 2. I am proud cat mom of a diabetic elderly cat who shows love and communicates her needs differently than any pet that I have ever had. The reason why I mention my cat here is that I learned that not every pet communicates his or her needs the same way as other pets. It shows humans and pets have disabilities. Now, I think it would be hard to teach students about the human characteristics in young adult literature and re-enforcing it with informational text with the timeframe I have. Personally, I think my students might like it. However, there is a growing population of students in public schools and that population is students with disabilities and mental health development.

Since I only see my nephew every other year now, his development mentally and physically does not seem to change much. I know he is learning basics like reading and writing at school, but he still has a hard time communicating what he needs or how he is feeling. Up until last year, he was at school that was centered on only kids with Down's syndrome. My nephew has a hard time speaking because he has a slightly larger tongue. The teachers there helped him communicate his needs through sign language or a picture book with emotions and family members that he could point to the appropriate pictures. For example, if one of my nieces took a Hot Wheels car from him and made him mad, he could point to mad, a sibling, and the Hot Wheels car. He moved to a different school toward the end of last year, and it was almost as if he went backwards instead of forward. However, the poor kid had to leave an environment that he was used to for many years to new teachers, students, and school. He goes to school now with kids who are not all like him. He goes to school with autistic children, Down's syndrome children, and children of other disabilities. This got me thinking about my school.

We do not have children with Down's syndrome, but we do have children with autism and different disabilities. We also have a growing population of children with mental health issues. This year in particular I have more students with a 504 that have ADHD and anxiety disorder listed on them. I have six of them in my honors class. It was unheard to have students

with 504 plans in honors, but this year out of the ten 504s that I have seven of them are in my honors classes. Therefore, this got me thinking; I wonder if these students have read, learned, or shared with their peers what it is like to be them.

I was fortunate to have a student last year who was autistic, but he tricked me. During the first week of school, he made eye contact and shook my hand during open house. He was answering questions aloud in class. We even did a lesson on how to introduce ourselves to adults and a new student. He was the first to demonstrate with the class how to do it. I was so confused on who he was, I started asking other students if they were him and they were not. When I finally figured, I was blown away with all the hard work he did to be able to socialize as normal as he could. All the students looked out for him, made sure he was okay, and included him at physical activity time and at lunch. I loved watching the students interact with him in such a positive way. Therefore, when I read the description of the seminar and thinking about my nephew and my now former student, I knew I wanted to read forms of literature that had a character that showed them as a human with mental disability.

School/Student Demographics

Bailey Middle School, a Charlotte Mecklenburg School, is in the northern Mecklenburg County in the town of Cornelius, North Carolina. We are a middle school that is on the move. Our student body has around 1,600 students. Bailey has exceed growth for six straight years and we have shown a growth index of +12.78. We maintain a letter “A” grade for the fourth consecutive year. Our subgroup growth with seven of our eight subgroups scoring at a +4.0 growth index or higher this past year (1. African American, 2. White, 3. Hispanic, 4. Asian, 5. Students with Disabilities, 6. Economically disadvantaged, and 7. English Language Learners). Two of these subgroups (African American at +6.27 and Economically Disadvantaged at +7.76) increased from a letter grade from a C to a B measured by their growth and grade level proficiency. Our students with disabilities grew +7.38 growth index points and 11 letter grade points.

The students that I teach and work with all fit into those subgroupings. I teach seventh grade English/Language Arts. My classes range from 27-32 students. I teach two standard plus and two honors English/Language Arts classes. My two standard plus classes and only one of my honors classes is very diverse in race, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and disabilities. I will use the common core standards to help guide my unit. I will use grade level appropriate short stories to get the students thinking about what it means to be normal and what a normal human is. I will use grade level appropriate informational text from Newsela for the unit and the activities in the unit.

Unit Goals

At our school, we use the common core standards that are provided to us by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. ELA covers many standards in our lessons, but we try to select one or two to focus on with a story, poem, play, or informational text. Depending on the day, I can cover anywhere from five standards in a class period.

The ones that I will focus on when dealing with fictional text are citing several pieces of textual evidence, analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact, and compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. The last standard in this list will focus more on informational text.

For informational text standards, we will focus on the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text. This standard will pair nicely with comparing and contrasting a fictional portrayal of a character to real life events.

Besides the common core standards, I want my students to become successful humans in life. In order to be a successful human, we need to learn how to be a human to each other in a world that does not treat us always like a decent human being. The goals I have for this unit are:

1. Students will become familiar with the Equal Rights Amendment, Human Rights Act, and the American with Disabilities Act.
2. Students will become better at analyzing and reading a nonfiction article.
3. Students will come up with a creative solution to try to solve a presented conflict in a given nonfiction article.
4. Students will become more aware of the people around them and the needs of their peers.

By introducing students to the Equal Rights Amendment, Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Human Right Act, I want the students to realize what rights they have now and later in life. I want them to understand that their rights or a friend's rights are violated. I want them to try to problem solve on how to approach a real life situation if their rights have been violated. Now, I know I am going to have to be very careful with different classes on how we approach the word violated and rights. They reason why I am going to have to be careful is because they are seventh graders and they always feel like their rights are violated. The use of the web quest will help students to see what their human rights are and the proper steps to self-advocate.

Content Research

The Equal Rights Amendment, Human Rights Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act is a wonderful to connect the short stories and informational pieces together. Equal Right Amendment was introduced to the United States Constitution in 1923 with the focus on women's rights.¹ Even though we have the 14th Amendment to protect us from racial discrimination, the Equal Rights Amendment is needed today. The Equal Rights Amendment covers sex discrimination.² When students view the Equal Rights Amendment, I want them see how parts of the amendment help the Human Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. I also want the students to see that if the amendment did not happen, the Human Rights Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act may look and read differently.

As I was conducting my research for this unit, I decided to look at the Human Rights Act. A few interesting facts that I learn was that the Human Rights Act was introduced not that long

¹ "FAQ." Equal Rights Amendment. Accessed November 1, 2019. <https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/faq>.

² "FAQ." Equal Rights Amendment. Accessed November 1, 2019. <https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/faq>.

ago. It was developed in 1998 in the United Kingdom.³ “The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Human Rights Act came into force in the UK in October 2000.”⁴ Some of the freedoms that are covered in the Human Rights Act of 1998 are right to life, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, belief, and religion, and right to marry.⁵ In total, thirteen articles fall under the Human Rights Act. I want students to compare the similarities and difference with students see in the Human Rights Act of 1998 in the United Kingdom and with the Equal Rights Amendment of the United States. I think it would good for students to understand that not everyone in every country has equal rights. I also want students to apply what they learn about the comparison to the short stories and informational text that they will be reading. I think by exploring the rights of being a human, it help will students to analyze the rights of the characters in short stories and explain how the character rights were violated. Then with using the articles from Newsela, take it the next step farther and explain how to change a law so it would include everyone, not just a few people.

I also want students to refer back to “The Scarlet Ibis.” “The Scarlet Ibis” is about a young boy named Doodle, who was born with a birth defect and struggles with walk. The speaker is Doodle’s older boy who sees Doodle as a “disappointment”.⁶ Even though Doodle was seen as a disappointment, his older brother took him wherever he went and tried to teach him how to walk. Much to Doodle’s disapproval; the narrator was determined to get Doodle to walk. One day with the help of his brother, Doodle started to walk! After learning how to walk, Doodle picked up more things that he could not do like throw a ball and run. Therefore, Doodle’s parents decided it was time to enroll him into school. After dinner one day, Doodle and his brother found a dead scarlet ibis. Doodle decided that he wanted to bury the scarlet ibis. Doodle and his brother went to Horsehead Landing for a swimming lesson even though Doodle was tired from activities of the day. Once they reached Horsehead Landing, it begins to storm. Doodle and his brother start to head back home. His brother starts to walk faster, and Doodle is still keeping up but struggling to keep up. The brother begins to run and Doodle cannot keep up anymore. The brother realizes that he cannot see Doodle anymore, so he retraces his steps to find him. When he finds Doodle, he is huddling under a bush with blood coming out of his mouth. He tries to get Doodle to move, but Doodle does not respond.⁷ Therefore, the ending leaves the reader to decide if Doodle is still alive or dead. I would have students reflect on what they learned about the Human Rights Act from the United Kingdom and how would the treatment of Doodle in the story be treated differently. I hope students would notice the fact that Doodle did not go to school because he had a disability, but understanding the Human Rights Act, I want students to identify that this is a violation and come up with a plan to help Doodle get into school. Another violation from the Human Rights Acts is how the narrator, older brother, tries to get Doodle to walk. I

³ “The Human Rights Act.” The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission. Accessed November 2, 2019. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

⁴ “The Human Rights Act.” The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission. Accessed November 2, 2019. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

⁵ “The Human Rights Act.” The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission. Accessed November 2, 2019. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

⁶ The Scarlet Ibis. Accessed September 19, 2019. <http://www.tnellen.com/westside/stories/ibis.html>.

⁷ The Scarlet Ibis. Accessed September 19, 2019. <http://www.tnellen.com/westside/stories/ibis.html>.

think students will pick out quickly because he does call him a “disappointment” in the beginning of the story. Students will probably call this bully, which it can be consider bully even though his brother only wants the best for his brother. Some students may call the older brother selfish for forcing Doodle to walk when he could not. I would have student write about what ways would be better and more humane to help Doodle to walk. Students might say a walker or crutches, which would aid Doodle in walking.

After exploring the Human Rights Act of 1998 in the United Kingdom and the Equal Rights Amendment from the United States, I think that it is important to learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. I really think my students will understand the act and see themselves in the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Americans with Disabilities Act is “a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.”⁸ This law can help people with their employment, transportation, public services at the state and local government, and telecommunications.⁹ It also helps our students. Individual Education Plan, or IEP, and 504s fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Americans with Disabilities Act is to help level the playing field for people who do not have the same advantages as others. After looking at the Americans with Disabilities Act, I want students to look at the short stories and come up solutions to help the character who has the disability. For example, in “Raymond’s Run,” the main character has to take care of her disabled brother, but she also has to run a race that day. Raymond wanders, so his sister knows she needs to keep her eyes on him. Instead of having Raymond run in the race with her, she puts him on the swings and tells him not to leave the swings. Squeaky, the narrator and Raymond’s littler sister, starts to run her fifty-yard dash race. Squeaky notices that Raymond is running right along with her.¹⁰ I want students to see how Squeaky learned a valuable lesson about her brother. She realizes that even though he has a disability, Raymond can do more than what people think. With that, I want students to relate to a time when they tried or did something that they thought people would never expect them to do. Then revisit the Americans with Disabilities Act, I want students to think about how this could have helped Raymond. I think most students would say the Americans with Disabilities Act would help the people running the track meet find a way for Raymond to participate, but they may not think either.

I would have the students read “Raymond’s Run” and “The Scarlet Ibis” before we deep dived into the Human Rights Act, Equal Rights Amendment, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Therefore, these stories would be the precursor to the unit. I want to discuss with students how cells turn on and how other cells do not. Because of triggering of what cells turn on or off, I want the students to understand that a person with disabilities is still a person. In our seminar, we talked about how the messages sent to cells is similar to a light switch. You turn the light switch

⁸ “An Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act.” ADA National Network, 2017. <https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-overview>.

⁹ “An Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act.” ADA National Network, 2017. <https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-overview>.

¹⁰ Calkins, Lucy. “Mentor Text: ‘Raymond’s Run’ By Toni Cade Bambara 1,” 2014. <https://www.remsencsd.org/cms/lib/NY01913914/Centricity/Domain/46/RaymondsRun.pdf>.

on; it gives you all your limbs for example. This shows us that our bodies develop in many different ways and we are still people. In the case of someone who has Down's Syndrome there are many changes due to the extra chromosome, but we are all still people.

Using different articles from Newsela and Common Lit will help students to make connections to the Human Rights Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. I do not want students to read about all the heart-warming, successful stories. They need to read about how humans with disabilities struggled, and continue to struggle daily, to be treated equally. They need to read about the struggle and come up their own conclusion on how to help individual(s).

What I envision for the final product is a CNN type of talk show or newscast. Students will summarize a given text, and present the problem. Using the text and what they learned from the web quest, students will also come up with possible solutions that will move more closely to having accommodations equal for everyone.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Socratic Seminar

I will use a Socratic seminar strategy to help students facilitate the discussions. The purpose of a Socratic seminar is to tie together a focused discussion to the essential question and selected text. I will give them a few questions to start the discussion, but I will give them time to make up their own questions that they want to ask of the class. The questions will initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.

Close Reading

Using small chunks of the text to read, students will reread, mark and annotate the text. We will use close reading to examine author's craft, characterization, and theme of the text. The purpose of using close reading is develop a comprehensive understanding of the text by engaging in one or more focused readings of a text.

Graphic Organizers for reading and writing

By using a variety of graphic organizers, this will give students a visual model of how the text is organized and how the information is organized. The purpose for using graphic organizers when reading a text is to increase reading comprehension and discussion. Graphic organizers are used in writing so they can provide a visual system for organizing multiple ideas, details, and textual support that needs to be included in a piece of writing.

Signpost

Signposts are used to help trigger the read to stop, notice what they are reading is something important, and make a note of it. We will focus on aha moment, tough questions, and words of the wiser. Aha moment answers the question of how might these change things. We will focus on

character development, plot, and internal conflict. Tough questions will answer the question what does this question make me wonder about? With this step, we will be examining internal conflict, theme, and character development. Words of the wiser will answer the questions what is the life lesson and how might it affect the character? This happens when the main character and another character are in a serious moment, and the wiser one shares his/her wisdom and offers advice to help the other with a problem or decision. We will use this step to explore theme, internal conflict, and the relationship between character and plot. There are three more steps in the signpost strategy, but my students need more time and direction on theme, internal conflict, and characterization.

Mark the Text

Students will mark the text as they read for highlight specific purposes like author's craft. It will also help them to reexamine the text. Marking the text while we close read helps the students to slow down and really look at what they are reading.

Metacognitive Markers

Metacognitive markers is a way to close read a text and make note of questions or connections they may have as they are reading. What this looks like is that if a student has a question, they will write a question mark and write out the question next to the part of the text where they have a question. If a student thinks something is interesting, they will write down an exclamation point and explain what they find interesting. If a student has a connection with something that they read in the text, they will use an asterisk and explain the connection.

Classroom lessons/activities

For my unit, I will have students read various picture books that explain autism, Down's Syndrome, ADHD, deafness, and mental illness. Since I am not a science teacher, I thought the use of picture books would explain these disabilities in a way that I could not do it. I think if students have an idea of how a person's disability is developed then we can move onto how it makes them a human. I mentioned the term human diversity early in the prospectus. With the students exploring and learning about different disabilities, I want them to begin to realize that having a disability does not make another less of a human.

After we learn about how a disability is develop, I will provide students a nonfiction article either from Newsela or Common Lit to practice their close reading and annotating skills. Students will also complete SOAPStone chart to help analyze their understanding of the text. In the two stories that I mentioned, the main characters each have a sibling that has a birth defect. The main characters try to push away their sibling because of their birth defect. As each story goes on, the main characters learn how special and wonderful their sibling is even with a birth defect. While we read a short story, I want to put in case studies on how people with disabilities have fought for their rights as a human. I think the mixture of a fictional story with some case studies and informational text will help to make the connection to the real world.

For the overall project, I want the students to create a talk show/newscast about what it means to be a human with a little something extra special. I also want the students include what they learn from the Human Rights Act, Equal Rights Amendment, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. I figure this would be a good way to measure how the students understand what it means to be a human in this world. Students will complete a mini-research project on a disability or a violation of the Human Rights Act or Americans with Disabilities Act. They will work in groups to create and design a talk show/newscast with the idea that everyone is human in mind. They will present their talk show/newscast to the class. If we get approval from our principal, I would like to show the talk show/newscast to the school at grade level lunches.

Day one: Day one is the hook activity. This will give students the needed background knowledge in order to participate in this unit. Students will need their Chromebook to complete the activity. For the warm up for the day, students will be receive a handout that will have the ten myths about students with disabilities. Some the myths will include people with learning disabilities are not very smart, people with disabilities cannot go to school, people with disabilities cannot learn in school, etc. This will be in a chart where the students will mark true or false and then they will have to explain their reasoning for thinking what they do about the myths. In a normal situation, I would have the students' share their responses and reasons with a partner or the class, but this is a sensitive matter and I do not want someone to feel offended on day one of the unit.

After the warm up, we will move into the web quest on the Human Rights Act. The web quest goes through how the Human Rights Act was developed and whom it helps. Students will watch videos and read information on the Human Rights Act. They will fill out a question sheet that helps guides students through the web quest.

Day two: Students will need their notebooks, Chromebook, butcher paper, markers or colored pencils, copies of Newsela articles, SOAPSTone chart, and talk show/newscast criteria and rubric. Students will complete a daily oral language warm up. This will focus on connotation, sentence structure, commas, and context clues. I use daily oral language warm ups because it goes through grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills. It also sets up the mini lesson for a particular skill that needs to be covered for the day. A student and a partner will teach the warm up to the class. I provide them the answer key and help with any explaining of a term or problem that needs to be explained to the class. Students will make corrections on their warm up using another color pencil, pen, or marker.

After we have gone over the warm up, we will review SOAPSTone. We have already used SOAPSTone at the during the year and social studies uses SOAPS with their documents of the week, but some students still need to hear and see it modeled again. I will model how to complete SOAPSTone using the article "Michigan Girl Watches Supreme Court Argue Her Service Dog, School Case." The article is about a girl, who has cerebral palsy, and her service dog. Her doctor recommended that she gets a service dog to her open doors and pick up things. When she started school, the school denied the use of the service dog because they can provide an aide to help her with doing the things that a service dog can do. We will read the article

silently the first time. I will give the students ten minutes to read it. You can start with any article that you would like to model SOAPSTone, but I thought this tied in nicely the article tied in nicely with the web quest and the topic. We will complete SOA together as a class then PSTone will be completed with a shoulder buddy. I will give the students about ten minutes to complete their half of SOAPSTone. After students have completed their half of the SOAPSTone, we will go over it to make sure we are on the right track with how to complete it. They will tape or glue this in their notebooks along with the article. Next, I will give students their group articles and talk show/newscast criteria and rubric. They will, again, tape or glue this into their notebooks. We will go over the criteria of the talk show/newscast. I will show them an example of a newscast so they can see what I am expecting from them. In their groups, they will brainstorm how they want the final product to look. For homework, students will read their assigned article and complete SOAPSTone.

Day three: Students will need their notebooks, Chromebook, butcher paper, markers or colored pencils, copies of different Newsela article, talk show/newscast criteria. Students will complete a daily oral language warm up. This will focus on analogies, commas, root words, and editing. A student and a partner will teach the warm up to the class. I provide them the answer key and help with any explaining of a term or problem that needs to be explained to the class. Students will make corrections on their warm up using another color pencil, pen, or marker. As students are working on the warm up, I will do a quick on the SOAPSTone homework. What I am looking for at this point with the homework is completion. Could the students complete SOAPSTone independently it what I am looking for.

Today we will go in depth on the roles and responsibilities of the talk show/newscast final product. Place students into groups of four or five people. Students will need to select one of the following roles: host, architect, Human Right activist, parent or psychologist. If you have groups of four, students will have the same roles with the exception of choosing either a parent or a psychologist. The host will give a summary of the article that the group had to read. They will also come up with three questions to ask the guest. The architect role as a guest is to provide a better design of a place that would be more inclusive to everyone. Human Right activist will explain the laws and rights that protect the people that are effected in the given article. The parent would present what life is like for the people in the article. For example, they would share what it was like to raise and care for a person with a disability or disabilities. The psychologist would explain the mental and emotional side of the person with the disability. All of the guests will come up with a solution to the problem that is presented in the text and answers to the host questions. They will use Bailey Middle School, a grocery store either Food Lion or Harris Teeter because they are local and close by or another setting of their choosing as long as it is approved by me first. The reason way they need a setting is because I want them to problem solve for a solution in an everyday situation in an area that is familiar to the students.

Another component to the talk show/newscast is a visual one and a hashtag. Students will create a hashtag and a visual that supports their point of view and solution to the problem. For example, the architect could create a new floorplan for one of settings that is listed above. The Human Rights activist could share laws that protect the person or people from the article. They could create a poster outlining those laws. The psychologist would create a visual that would describe the disability and help the other students understand the mindset of the person from the

article. The hashtag will be a short sentence that shows the importance of what guest is explaining.

Students will also need to write a script or note cards to help them present their responds and to keep them focused as they present their information. Students will have homework. They will to complete their visual and their hashtag.

Day four: Students will need their notebooks, Chromebook, butcher paper, markers or colored pencils, copies of different Newsela article, and talk show/newscast criteria. Students will complete a daily oral language warm up. This will focus on context clues, sentence structure, figures of speech, and editing. A student and a partner will teach the warm up to the class. I will provide them the answer key and help with any explaining of a term or problem that needs to be expanded on to the class. Students will make corrections on their warm up using another color pencil, pen, or marker. I will spot the students homework from last night. I am looking to see if their hashtag and visual go together. Do they complement each other or is the hashtag and visual not working together to get the point through to the viewer?

Before we begin working on the script, the small groups will come together and collaborate on a SOAPSTone poster. Students will discuss their SOAPSTone homework and compare answers. Students will use those answers or a combination of the group answer to create the power. Students will also draw a backdrop to support the article.

Once students have completed the backdrop and SOAPSTone poster, the group can then move into working on the script or note cards. The reason why I said to use note cards is that so groups may prefer to use note cards to read off as oppose to the computer. My preference would be the students to use note cards especially because they will be recording themselves.

Day five: Students will use the day as a workday. Students will finish their scripts and SOAPSTone as poster as needed. After students finish their scripts, they will practice their scripts. If groups need more time the next day to finish their scripts, I will provide them with extra time the next school day, but they will not get the whole class.

Day six: Students will need their SOAPSTone poster, scripts, visuals, and Chromebook. Students will record their talk show/newscast using Flip Grid. If you have never used Flip Grid, a free online tool that allows students to record short videos. The time length varies from one to five minutes. Students can edit and rerecord pieces of a recording, as they needed. They can add virtual stickers to the video cover page. Students can view the work from their class and like the videos from the other students in the class. You can create as many classes on your account. Each class will have a different code, similar to google classroom, so other classes are viewing other classes. I post the code in google classroom with the assignment name so the code stays with the class it belongs too. The recording of the talk show/newscast may take the whole class period.

If you do not want to use Flip Grid, students could always perform their talk show/newscasts in front of the class. I did think about this option first, but I have more students than normal this year who are so painfully shy or have extreme anxiety that I thought Flip Grid would be a better alternative for them. My hope is that the recording will make them a little more

comfortable because it is not in front of the class, they will have their scripts, and they are with a small group to support each other as oppose to presenting the information by themselves. If the groups finish recording early, they will be working on their independent IXL projects or reading logs.

Assessment

Day seven: Students will need their Chromebook and headphones. For this day's warm up students will complete a video writing prompt. They will view a two to three minute video and respond to one of the three provided questions that accompany the video. I do ask students if they would like to share their responses to the class. I always have three to four students who want to share which can lead to more students wanting to share their responses. I limit the sharing to about five to ten minutes of sharing and discussing because it gets to a point where they want to outdo each with imaginative responses or they make up responses without writing anything down.

After our sharing of the video writing prompt responses, students will view the Flip Grids from the school day before recording session. The Flip Grid will be the final assessment piece to the unit. As students are viewing the videos, they will fill out an evaluation on their own group and two other groups Flip Grids.

Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standard

Here is a list of standards that I may use in teaching this unit. ELA covers many standards in our lessons, but we pick one to focus with that story, poem, or informational text. In some lessons, I can cover five standards, but I will only focus on one that the students are struggling with the most.

Literature Standards

RL 7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence.

RL 7.2 Determine the theme.

RL 7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

RL 7.6 Develops and contrasts the perspectives of different characters in a text.

RL 7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Informational Text Standards

RI 7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text.

RI 7.6 Determine author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

RI 7.7 Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject.

Writing Standards

W 7.2 Write informative/ explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W 7.5 Conduct research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources, and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

Speaking and Listening Standards

SL 7.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL 7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks.

Student Resources

“Adults with Autism Find Sense of Community, Build Self-Confidence.” Newsela. Washington Post, March 20, 2018. <https://newsela.com/read/lib-neurodiversity-movement-autism/id/41243/>.

Students will use this informational text to help research autism and create their newscast.

“An Overview of the Americans With Disabilities Act.” ADA National Network, 2017. <https://adata.org/factsheet/ADA-overview>.

This fact sheet gives the students the basics of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Calkins, Lucy. “Mentor Text: ‘Raymond’s Run’ By Toni Cade Bambara 1,” 2014.

<https://www.remsencsd.org/cms/lib/NY01913914/Centricity/Domain/46/RaymondsRun.pdf>.

This fictional short story is about a boy with a disability and his sister who realizes that Raymond is capable of doing more than what she thought.

“FAQ.” Equal Rights Amendment. Accessed November 1, 2019.

<https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/faq>.

This fact sheet gives the students the basics of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Gentry, James. “My Disabilities Do Not Define Me. I Am Jim.” Newsela, April 11, 2018.

<https://newsela.com/read/lib-james-gentry-disability-dyslexia/id/42212/>.

This is an informational article from the point of view with a person with dyslexia. Students would use article to create their newscast.

“The Human Rights Act.” The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Accessed November 2, 2019. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

This fact sheet gives the students the basics of the Human Rights Act from the United Kingdom from 1998.

“Michigan Girl Watches Supreme Court Argue Her Service Dog, School Case.” Newsela. The Associated Press, November 3, 2016. <https://newsela.com/read/goldendoodle-supreme-court/id/23610/>.

Students will use this informational text about a girl who was denied the use of her service dog at school to help develop their newscast.

The Scarlet Ibis. Accessed September 19, 2019.

<http://www.tnellen.com/westside/stories/ibis.html>.

“The Scarlet Ibis” is a fictional short story about a boy and his younger brother Doodle who was born with a disability. The story goes through milestones that happen in Doodle’s life until it leads up to the climax of the story.

Teacher Resources

“Adults with Autism Find Sense of Community, Build Self-Confidence.” Newsela. Washington Post, March 20, 2018. <https://newsela.com/read/lib-neurodiversity-movement-autism/id/41243/>.

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This fictional short story is about a boy with a disability and his sister who realizes that Raymond is capable of doing more than what she thought.

Cook, Julia, and Anita DuFalla. *Uniquely Wired: A Story about Autism and Its Gifts*. Boys Town, NE: Boys Town Press, 2018.

This picture book can be used to help explain Autism.

Draper, Sharon M. *Out of My Mind*. Farmington Hills, MI: Thorndike Press, a Part of Gale, a Centage Company, 2019.

This fictional novel is about a girl who cannot speak and has other disabilities. She is the narrator of the novel so the reader will get the point of a view of person with a disability. I might use an excerpt from the novel.

“FAQ.” Equal Rights Amendment. Accessed November 1, 2019. <https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/faq>.

This fact sheet gives the students the basics of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Gentry, James. “My Disabilities Do Not Define Me. I Am Jim.” Newsela, April 11, 2018. <https://newsela.com/read/lib-james-gentry-disability-dyslexia/id/42212/>.

This is an informational article from the point of view with a person with dyslexia. Students would use article to create their newscast.

Grandin, Temple. *Thinking in Pictures*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.

This picture book could be used to help explain autism a little more.

Hunt, Lynda Mullaly. *Fish in a Tree*. Waterville, ME: Thorndike Press, 2018.

This novel has a character with a disability. I would use a short excerpt to help explain the treatment of character’s with disabilities a novel.

“Michigan Girl Watches Supreme Court Argue Her Service Dog, School Case.” Newsela. The Associated Press, November 3, 2016. <https://newsela.com/read/goldendoodle-supreme-court/id/23610/>.

Students will use this informational text about a girl who was denied the use of her service dog at school to help develop their newscast.

Moore-Mallinos, Jennifer. *My Friend Has Down Syndrome*. Barrons Educational Series, 2008. Students could use this picture book to gain a better understanding of Down’s Syndrome.

Palacio, R. J. *Wonder*. United Kingdom: Penguin Books.

This novel has a narrator with a disability. I would use a short excerpt to help explain the treatment of narrator’s interaction with other characters in the novel.

“The Human Rights Act.” The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission. Accessed November 2, 2019. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>.

Students will use this informational text about a girl who was denied the use of her service dog at school to help develop their newscast.

The Scarlet Ibis. Accessed September 19, 2019.

<http://www.tnellen.com/westside/stories/ibis.html>.

“The Scarlet Ibis” is a fictional short story about a boy and his younger brother Doodle who was born with a disability. The story goes through milestones that happen in Doodle’s life until it leads up to the climax of the story.

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Cook, Julia, and Anita DuFalla. *Uniquely Wired: A Story about Autism and Its Gifts*. Boys Town, NE: Boys Town Press, 2018.

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Moore-Mallinos, Jennifer. *My Friend Has down Syndrome*. Barrons Educational Series, 2008.

Palacio, R. J. *Wonder*. United Kingdom: Penguin Books.

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The Scarlet Ibis. Accessed September 19, 2019. <http://www.tnellen.com/westside/stories/ibis.html>.