



Exploring African American Citizenship Through Spoken Word

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Elementary Language Arts Teachers
Special Education Teachers

Keywords: Spoken Word Poetry, Slam Poetry, Oral Traditions

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

Synopsis: Citizenship is defined as a state of being vested with the rights, privileges, and duties of a citizen. Citizenship addresses the character of an individual and how they are viewed as a member of society. Behavior in terms of the duties, obligations, and functions of a citizen are all key components to defining citizenship. In America citizenship has been a long and painful process for some Americans, and for many other Americans true citizenship is continuing to be a legal battle. African Americans have been fighting for citizenship in America since the Emancipation Proclamation and before Phillis Wheatley. The history of poetry within the African American Community has a long and deep history that tells a story of oppression, family and perseverance. Poetry has evolved from being an oral tradition, to a written form of art and now to a new widely accepted form of orality, known as spoken word or slam poetry. With slam poetry captivating America and pushing back on what America accepts as an art form, this unit will explore what an oral tradition is, how oral traditions help to define African American citizenship and how oral traditions continue to contribute to citizenship through spoken word and slam poetry.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 120 students in fifth grade social studies and 5th grade language arts.

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Introduction

Citizenship is defined as a state of being vested with the rights, privileges, and duties of a citizen. Citizenship addresses the character of an individual and how they are viewed as a member of society. Behavior in terms of the duties, obligations, and functions of a citizen are all key components to defining citizenship. In America citizenship has been a long and painful process for some Americans, and for many other Americans true citizenship is continuing to be a legal battle. African Americans have been fighting for citizenship in America since the Emancipation Proclamation. The history of poetry within the African American Community has a long and deep history that tells a story of oppression, family and perseverance. Poetry has evolved from being an oral tradition, to a written form of art and now to a new widely accepted form of orality, known as spoken word or slam poetry. With slam poetry captivating America and pushing back on what America accepts as an art form, this unit will explore what an oral tradition is, how oral traditions help to define African American citizenship and how oral traditions continue to contribute to citizenship through spoken word and slam poetry.

Students are naturally curious about everything that is happening around them, and through this curriculum unit students are given the opportunity to spark that curiosity. Allowing students to have an opportunity to define who they are in America will give them a chance to explore the meaning of citizenship, who is considered a citizen and what must an American do to obtain a piece of the American dream. Students will have the opportunity to explore citizenship through various pieces of spoken word and slam poetry pieces.

Rationale

When I became a special education teacher, I wanted to become the type of teacher that provided opportunities for all students to learn. Becoming a teacher was exciting. Thinking of all the good teachers I had when I was in school and all of the not so good experiences as well, I think of a teacher that helped me gain a vast knowledge of science and another teacher that gave me a love for reading that I still have today. But most of all, my teachers gave me the love to become a lifelong learner. Wanting to give my students that same passion, tenacity, and capability to become lifelong learners, I desire to engage my students by utilizing hands-on and meaningful activities that will enhance and spark their curiosity. Students learning patterns are very different today, but I still want my students to develop a true sense of how learning takes place. Throughout this school year, my goal is to provide students with many hands-on activities, guided notes, and scaffolding learning groups.

I am an elementary school exceptional children's teacher, and my English Language Arts Classes are responsible for knowing and understanding various cultures and how past events have impacted various countries centuries later. With this curriculum unit I plan to help my students gain a wealth of knowledge about spoken word poetry, its connections with oral traditions and how they both help define African American citizenship. Through this unit I will make a connection between the history of oral traditions and the modern-day form of spoken word. To accomplish this goal this curriculum unit uses a variety of teaching strategies that will engage student's through hands on activities and many literary concepts.

Demographics

I have been working in the Special Education Field since 2007 and teaching in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System for about thirteen years. I teach a self-contained classroom at a school located in the inner city of Charlotte, NC. All of my students have some form of a disability, ranging from Autism to severe depression. Many of my students suffer from ADHD so it is very hard for them to stay engaged for long periods of time.

My school is Albemarle Road Elementary School in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, a large urban school district in North Carolina. Teachers within our school are encouraged to use a variety of teaching techniques and strategies while meeting students' individual needs. We have the freedom to modify the content and the delivery of the content based on our ability to recognize our student's individual readiness for the content that we are exploring. The school has approximately 807 students consisting of several different subgroups, including 30% African-American, 53% Hispanic, and 15% Asian, 2 % White; 46% Female, and 54 % Male.

Standards

Within the North Carolina Common Core English Language Arts Standards, students are asked to compare various texts to each other, and students must make clear claims in an argumentation essay while citing textual evidences. English language arts standards and social studies standards will be used to teach this curriculum unit. To explore the literacy components of this curriculum unit students will be covering the objectives RL. 5.2- 5.6, students will examine the text to understand the meaning of words or phrases, students will identify the tone of the text , and students will be expected to learn various literary terms. In fifth grade student begin to explore the elements of citizenship, this curriculum unit will also address standards 5.C&G.2.3. Through these standards students are expected to exemplify ways in which the rights, responsibilities and privileges of citizens are protected under the United States Constitution. Through standards 5.C.1.4 students are expected to learn and understand how cultural narratives (legends, songs, ballads, games, folk tales and art forms) reflect the lifestyles, beliefs and struggles of diverse ethnic groups.

Content Research

Overview of Unit Specific Terms and Phrases

Cultural Narratives

When we explore that concepts of cultural narratives, we must understand that African American Slaves were named based on their slave owners last names and first-generation enslaved family members that were brought to America. "According to the North Carolina Encyclopedia, slaves remained nameless from the time of their capture until their purchase by American masters" (Powell 2006). Quite a few slaves were allowed to keep their original African names or names assigned to them elsewhere (as reflected by the frequency of Spanish and Portuguese names among the first generation of Carolina slaves)" (Powell 2006). Having an identity starts at birth,

when a baby is born in America and given a name, they are officially considered an American citizen. Could the history of naming play a role in a person's citizenship? Many scholars believe that a person's name helps determine how they are perceived as a citizen. Through spoken word, Mahogany Browne explores the components of a name and how a name can impact the opportunities that you are afforded as an American citizen. Cultural narratives matter and to begin to understand how, why and when African American Citizenship became a major concern we must first explore the Declaration of Independence.

The Principles of the Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were more radical and far-reaching than the nation realized at the time of their creation. The phrase "*all men created equal*" only referred to white men, and some American's questioned the sincerity of the constitution from the beginning of its origination. How could the United States believe that "*all men are created equal*" and slavery was a huge economic empire at the time? During the early 1850's many American's began to question the conscience of the country. Southern states demanded that they have the right to run the states as they wished and northern states wanted more tax revenue from southern states. Southern states began to protest the interference of the federal government, whose anti-slavery policies threatened to pull the wealth of slavery away from southern states. Slavery and states' rights became huge fighting causes and the conflict between basic human rights / freedoms and monetary gain waged the deadliest war this country has ever seen. Southern states believed that it was their natural right to own slaves and that slavery was an economical necessity.

Citizenship Within the African American Community

According to the 14th amendment of the United States Constitution, "*All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*" The constitutional right of born American Citizens are not exactly the same, many American's face discrimination, inequality within social structures and true American citizenship has not been accomplished. When the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on July 9, 1868, it should have seemingly placed a halt on the racism that had existed in America for centuries. Instead the 14th amendment led to many decades of continued advocacy for Black Americans and many other cultures that are not accepted as true American Citizens. Through oral traditions, poetry and spoken word, citizenship is being expressed in a new form of art where everyone is accepted, and true citizenship is never denied.

What is an Oral Tradition?

According to Britannica, an oral tradition is the most widespread mode of human communication. Oral traditions, also known as orality, are a very diverse way of communication through which people transmit, knowledge arts and ideas. Oral traditions have been used by many cultures to help families preserve some of their history and culture. Oral traditions also

allowed slaves to escape the hardships that they faced on a daily basis. Oral story telling became a tradition that allowed slaves to create a sense of community and to establish a culture of pride. Oral traditions have helped to define citizenship in so many families through symbolism, folktales, ballads, or verses (poetry).

Symbolism within Oral Traditions

Although folktales reflected the uncertainties of slaves and the life of enslaved African Americans, they also provided a message of hope stability and assurance. “Today slam poetry (spoken word), offers a place for marginalized identities to be celebrated and expressed” (Somers- Willet 2009). Slam poetry has offered a safe space for African American poets to be honest about their self- identity, self-expression and to defy what America deems as acceptable. “Slam poetry aims to entertain its audiences through celebrating diversity and liberal politics, slam aesthetics frequently correspond to performing marginalized identity in order to engage and at times exploit the audiences shared values of differences” (Somers-Willet 2009). Although slam poetry is open to and includes many different cultures, the primary focus of slam poetry is often poets of color, working class poets, woman and other groups that are considered marginalized.

What is Slam Poetry?

In its purest form, in the classical mode in which it was created, poetry was used to remember stories (Eleveld, Mark and Marc Kelly Smith 2005). When there wasn't any television, radio or social media, people would be paid to travel long distances to tell stories and entertain crowds. People would gather in circles, rather they be on plantation fields or in sold out auditoriums, to hear stories that would shape the world. “Slam poetry began in Chicago in 1912, when a poet named Harriet Monroe founded a magazine called Poetry. Some poets reference the beginning of the Poetry Magazine as the Chicago Renaissance of poetry” (Eleveld, Mark and Marc Kelly. Smith 2005). This magazine was created out of the need of an artistic shake-up, Monroe was angered by the poor treatment that was given to the then modern poets. The more success and recognition Poetry Magazine obtained; the authors that were once seen as social revolutionaries began a different type of movement. By the 1960's social consciousness, the development of postmodernism and structuralism had begun. Poets would meet at venues and perform for one another in what was called, “poets hearing poets”. During these performances the audience engagement was unmatched, and it was a far cry from the traditional poetry readings that had been performed in the past. Poetry had a new energy that created a safe space for all styles of poetry. The initial goal was to increase the audience for poetry as a spoken form of art. Orality itself is neither the ultimate characteristic of verse's current popularity or its most important aspect. When discussing poetry orality is only one component that needs to be considered, setting, phrases, tone and physical dynamics are all important concepts.

Poetry and Citizenship

Poetry has a long history of providing people with an opportunity of expression. In this modern era , slam poetry (spoken word) has provided a safe space for poets to speak -out against racial in-equality. Slam poetry often serves as a rare opportunity for liberal, white, middle-class

audiences to legitimately support poets of color who critique white positions of privilege. Rewarding these poets maybe a way of showing support for antiracist attitudes, which support the slam culture of rebellion, and fighting against the status quo. “Recognizing black identity, like all identities is both performed and performative in nature and is ultimately fluid” (Somers-Willet 2009). Performance of black identify by poets allows the world to see the

In America the term poetry has a varied history. It has been used to describe rap, sonnets, spoken word, slams, and verse. Poetry is a form of art that has the potential to be both formative and transformative. Poetry is not merely a literary exercise but yet a gateway to provoke change or otherwise challenge positions of identity. Citizenship can be explained through poetry so that all ages have the ability to relate or understand the message that is being conveyed. Through this curriculum unit students will explore cultural narratives using varying forms of poetry to reflect the lifestyles, beliefs and struggles of diverse ethnic groups.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Close Reading

Close reading expects readers to focus on the information that a text provides, without relying on a lot of information or support. Close reading discourages front-loading, information to students. The goal of close reading instruction is to foster independent readers who are able to plumb the depths of a text by considering only the text itself. close reading requires that students analyze the texts more thoroughly, a “one and done” reading is not enough. Students will need to read and reread the texts. Because there are three reading goals, plan to visit the text three separate times. The first reading will focus on what the text says, the second reading will emphasize how the text works, and the third will engage students in evaluating the text, comparing it with other texts, or thinking about its implications in their lives. Students will use close reading within this curriculum unit to analyze poems, research information that they question and discuss how these poems apply to history or to their daily lives.

Graphic Organizers

There are two types of graphic organizers commonly used to compare different objects. A Venn-Diagram is used to compare two objects similarities to the object’s differences. A Venn - Diagram provides students a visual display of the similarities and differences between two items. In this unit we will use a Venn-Diagram to compare various pieces of poetry.

Think- Pair – Share

Think-pair-share (TPS) is a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about an assigned reading. This strategy requires students to (1) think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and (2) share ideas with classmates. Discussing with a partner maximizes participation, focuses attention and engages students in

comprehending the reading material. Students will use the TPS strategy to analyze longer poems that will be taught within this curriculum unit.

Interactive Word-Wall

An interactive word wall is basically a large graphic organizer displaying critical vocabulary on the wall. It is thematic or unit-based and includes pictures or graphics related to the words. An interactive word wall includes visuals, graphics, or realia (real objects) with each word. Students are able to connect words with their meanings very quickly. The teacher creates the overall outline of the graphic organizer and the headings. Then while the teaching, learning, reading and exploring happen, students interact with the wall. They write the words that go in the categories and they add pictures for the words. If needed, the teacher is there to guide them. Within the curriculum unit students will create an interactive word wall with the following vocabulary words: rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, metaphor, onomatopoeia, lyric poetry, narrative poetry, imagery, personification, imagery, simile, refrain, symbol, irony, mood, tone, repetition, and symbolism.

Cornell Note Taking

Cornell note taking is a note taking system that was designed by Walter Paulk, a professor at Cornell University. Cornell notes are divided into three sections. The first section is the questions section, which is located on the left-hand side of a sheet of notebook paper. The second section is the notes section, this is the section where students and write any notes that they have taken. Last but not least is the third section, titled the summary section. The summary section is used as a tool for students to summarize the entire day's lesson. This is the time for students to focus on key ideas that were presented during the lesson. Students will use the Cornell Notes Handout, located in Appendix B.

Lessons/ Activities

Lesson 1: (Day 1)

Objectives: 5.C&G.2 Understand how citizens participate in their communities.

Do Now Activity: In their writing journals student will answer the following prompt:
What makes you an American Citizen?

Instructional Content: Students will watch the discovery education video. "American at its best" What does it mean to be a citizen?

<https://youtu.be/iUWJKznCa94>

Independent Practice: Students will complete the What makes a responsible citizen activity. (Located in the appendix)

Lesson 2: (Day 2 & 3)

Objectives: RL.5.2

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

Essential Questions:

What is the theme of I, Too by Langston Hughes? What details in the story/poem/drama help the reader determine this theme?

Do Now Activity:

Have students journal using the following sentence starter: I wish that everyone loved

Instructional Content

Day 2: The teacher will introduce the lesson using a YouTube clip on theme.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXPbijiMnV8>. Students will take notes on Theme. (Differentiation: Some students will receive a typed copy of the lesson vocabulary and notes with blanks that will need to be filled in as the lesson is taught.)

Vocabulary:

drama – a genre or category of literature generally designed to be presented to an audience by actors on stage that relies heavily on dialogue

poem – a literary work, generally composed in verse and using figurative language, typically composed using a set structure (i.e., organizational rules)

summary/summarize – a brief statement of the main points of a larger work or text; the act of providing such a statement or account

theme – the subject or underlying meaning that a literary text directly or indirectly explains, develops, and/or explores. In grades 1-3, theme is often referred to as central message

topic – the subject or matter being discussed or written about in a text, speech, etc.

Guided Practice: The poem I, Too by Langston Hughes will be read aloud as a class. Students will complete the reflection sheet independently.

Independent Practice: Learning stations will be used to complete the independent practice assignments.

Vocabulary Station:

Have students use each vocabulary word in a complete sentence. All sentences should be written within their academic journals.

Writing Station:

Have students write the following questions on small sticky notes:

1. What is the theme of I, Too by Langston Hughes? What details in the story/poem/drama help the reader determine this theme?
2. How does the author use the way he responds to his situation to develop the theme of the poem?

While reading, have students place the sticky note where the text answers the question. The student may want to make more than one sticky note per question to note multiple places that references or answers the question. Yellow, Blue and Pink sticky notes are recommended.

Research Station:

Students will create a one- page document that provides the class with a basic understanding of Langston Hughes and his work. Please include the following pieces:

- Picture of the poet
- Biographical information (birth, education, family, death (if deceased)) - Key events of the time period in which the author wrote
- Major themes in writing
- Most famous works
- Literary period – include other famous authors from the same period

Summary / Assessment Activity:

Students will complete a theme matching activity. Half the class is given cards with samples of poetry, stories and drama excerpts. The rest of the students are given cards with various themes. Students will circulate virtually using online platforms such as zoom breakout rooms , or through zoom chat conversations to locate their partner and then explain or write why they believe that their match is the best they could make, including summarizing the example and the reason the theme matches the literary selection, using quotes to substantiate their opinion. Students are evaluated on their ability to find an appropriate sample/theme and to defend the choice through summary of the text and use of details and quotations from the text. Grouping can be: Whole group, small group, pairs

Lesson 2: (Days 3- 5)

Objectives: RL.5.3 & 5.C.1.4

RL. 5.3

Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

5.C.1.4

Understand how cultural narratives (legends, songs, ballads, games, folk tales and art forms) reflect the lifestyles, beliefs and struggles of diverse ethnic groups.

Essential Questions:

How does Maya Angelou’s poem,” Still I Rise “compare to Mahogany Browne’s poem , “Amari Explains a Frown to Her Little Brother ?

Based on the Maya Angelou’s poem,” Still I Rise “ and Mahogany Browne’s poem , “Amari Explains a Frown to Her Little Brother, what cultural narratives or beliefs are being communicated ?

These two poems were chosen because they represent two different time periods. Through these two pieces of literature students will explore the cultural narratives of African Americans during the 1970's compared to the current era.

Do Now Activity:

Have students journal using the following sentence starter: If all my wishes came true, I would.....

Instructional Content

Day3: The teacher will introduce the lesson using a YouTube clip on compare / contrast.

<https://youtu.be/QVyOeD2xg94>.

Students will take notes on comparing & contrasting. (Differentiation: Some students will receive a typed copy of the lesson vocabulary and notes with blanks that will need to be filled in as the lesson is taught.). Have students complete a Cornell notes template while viewing this video.

Vocabulary:

compare – In a general sense, this is to measure or note the similarities and differences between or among objects, people, etc.; however, when used together with **contrast**, this refers to the highlighting of the ways in which two or more objects, people, etc. are alike or similar.

drama – a genre or category of literature generally designed to be presented to an audience by actors on stage that relies heavily on dialogue

event – a thing that happens; an occurrence

setting – the time and place of the action in a book, play, story, etc.

Guided Practice:

Day 3: The Poem, Still I rise - will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Day 4: The poem, Amari Explains a Frown to Her Little Brother will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Independent Practice: Learning stations will be used to complete the independent practice assignments.

Vocabulary Station:

Have students watch the following videos and complete the following activities:

https://youtu.be/DuHb9b_ykhM

1. Why is the setting of a story important?

Writing Station:

Have students write the following questions on small sticky notes:

3. What is the setting of Still I Rise by Maya Angelou? What details in the poem help the reader determine the setting?
4. How does the author use key words and phrases to develop the setting of the poem?

Research Station:

Day 3: Students will create a one- page document that provides the class with a basic understanding of Maya Angelou and her work. Please include the following pieces:

- Picture of the poet
- Biographical information (birth, education, family, death (if deceased)) - Key events of the time period in which the author wrote
- Major themes in writing
- Most famous works
- Literary period – include other famous authors from the same period

Day 4: Students will create a one- page document that provides the class with a basic understanding of Maya Angelou and her work. Please include the following pieces:

- Picture of the poet
- Biographical information (birth, education, family, death (if deceased)) - Key events of the time period in which the author wrote
- Major themes in writing
- Most famous works
- Literary period – include other famous authors from the same period

Summary / Assessment Activity:

Day 5:

American Poet Research Project (Located in the Appendix)

Lesson 3: (Day 6- Day 10)

Objectives:

5.C&G.2.3 Exemplify ways in which the rights, responsibilities and privileges of citizens are protected under the United States Constitution

5.C.& G. 1.4 Analyze different cultural narratives (legends, songs, ballads, games, folk tales and art forms) and how they reflect the lifestyles, beliefs and struggles of diverse ethnic groups.

RL.5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

Essential Questions:

How can change, progress, and growth be both positive and negative?

How does expansion effect various groups of people?

Do Now Activity:

Day 6: In their writing journals students will respond to the following prompt:

Describe an event that changed your life forever or make up and describe an event that would change your life forever.

Day 7: In their writing journals students will respond to the following prompt:

Describe someone who is a hero to you and explain why.

Day 8: In their writing journals students will respond to the following prompt:

Imagine yourself in a different century and describe an average day in your life.

Day 9: In their writing journals students will respond to the following prompt:
Write about a time in your life when you struggled with a choice and made the right one.

Day 10: In their writing journals students will respond to the following prompt:
What law would you like to see enacted which would help people? How would it help?

Guided Practice:

Day 6: A- Me Shaped Box By. Olivia Gatewood- will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Day 7: Say the Names By Elizabeth Acevedo- will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Day 8: What’s in a name? By Mahogany L. Browne- will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Day 9: We carry our roots By Mahogany L. Browne & Elizabeth Acevedo- will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Day 10: WOKE By. Mahogany L. Browne - will be read aloud to the class. Students will be responsible for completing the reflection sheet on their own. (Located in the Appendix)

Independent Practice/ Assessment: Students will complete the spoken word (narrative poetry) literary project.

Requirements: Students must have at least 10 narrative poems that describe events that they have witnessed in the following areas:

- Personal life
- Family Members Life
- Current Social Justice Efforts
- Any area approved by the teacher

RUBRIC FOR POETRY

Name:

Date:

Period:

CATEGORY	Excellent - 4	Good - 3	Satisfactory - 2	Needs Improvement - 1
THE WRITING PROCESS / EFFORT	Student devoted a lot of time and effort to the writing process and worked hard to make the poem a good read. The poem has no errors.	Student devoted adequate time and effort to the writing process and worked to get the job done. The poem may have one or two errors.	Student devoted some time and effort to the writing process but was not very thorough. Does enough to get by. There are several errors.	Student devoted little time and effort to the writing process. It appears that the student does not care about the assignment. The poem has many errors.

TITLE	The poem has a title that clearly relates to the poem and adds interest to the theme or message of the poem	The poem has a title that relates to the poem	The poem has a title	The poem has no title
NEATNESS	The final draft of the poem is readable, clean, neat and attractive. It is free of erasures and crossed-out words. It looks like the author took great pride in it.	The final draft of the poem is readable, neat and attractive. It may have one or two erasures, but they are not distracting. It looks like the author took some pride in it.	The final draft of the poem is readable and some of the pages are attractive. It looks like parts of it might have been done in a hurry.	The final draft is not neat or attractive. It looks like the student just wanted to get it done and didn't care what it looked like.
STYLE	The poem is written with a great sense of style. The poem has been well thought out and makes sense to the reader.	The poem is written with a defined with style. Thoughts are clear to read and understandable.	The poem is written somewhat with style. Thoughts are clear to a degree.	The poem lacks style and the thoughts did not come out clearly on paper.
VOCABULARY	The poem is filled with descriptive vocabulary that appeals to the reader.	The poem includes many descriptive elements and is appealing.	The poem includes some descriptive words and phrases.	The poem lacks description and does not allow the reader to visualize the poem.

TOTAL SCORE: _____

Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards

READING STRAND: Standards for Reading define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. Students should demonstrate their proficiency of these standards both orally and through writing. For students to be college and career ready, they must read from a wide range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. One of the key requirements of the Standards for Reading is that all students must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through school. Students should also acquire the habits of reading closely and independently for sustained periods of time. They need to connect prior knowledge and experiences to text. They must also show a steadily growing ability to discern more from and make fuller use of text.

CCR Anchor Standards for Reading

Key Ideas and Evidence

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas (RI) or themes (RL) of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view, perspective, or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Ideas and Analysis

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Complexity

10. Read and understand complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently, connecting prior knowledge and experiences to text.

Appendix 2

What Makes a Responsible Citizen?

Your task: Work with a partner to create a presentation that will teach others how to be a responsible citizen.

Possible formats: Book Creator, poster, skit, power point, or prezi.

*For all other formats, please get approval from your teacher before beginning. *

You must use the following vocabulary correctly somewhere in your presentation.

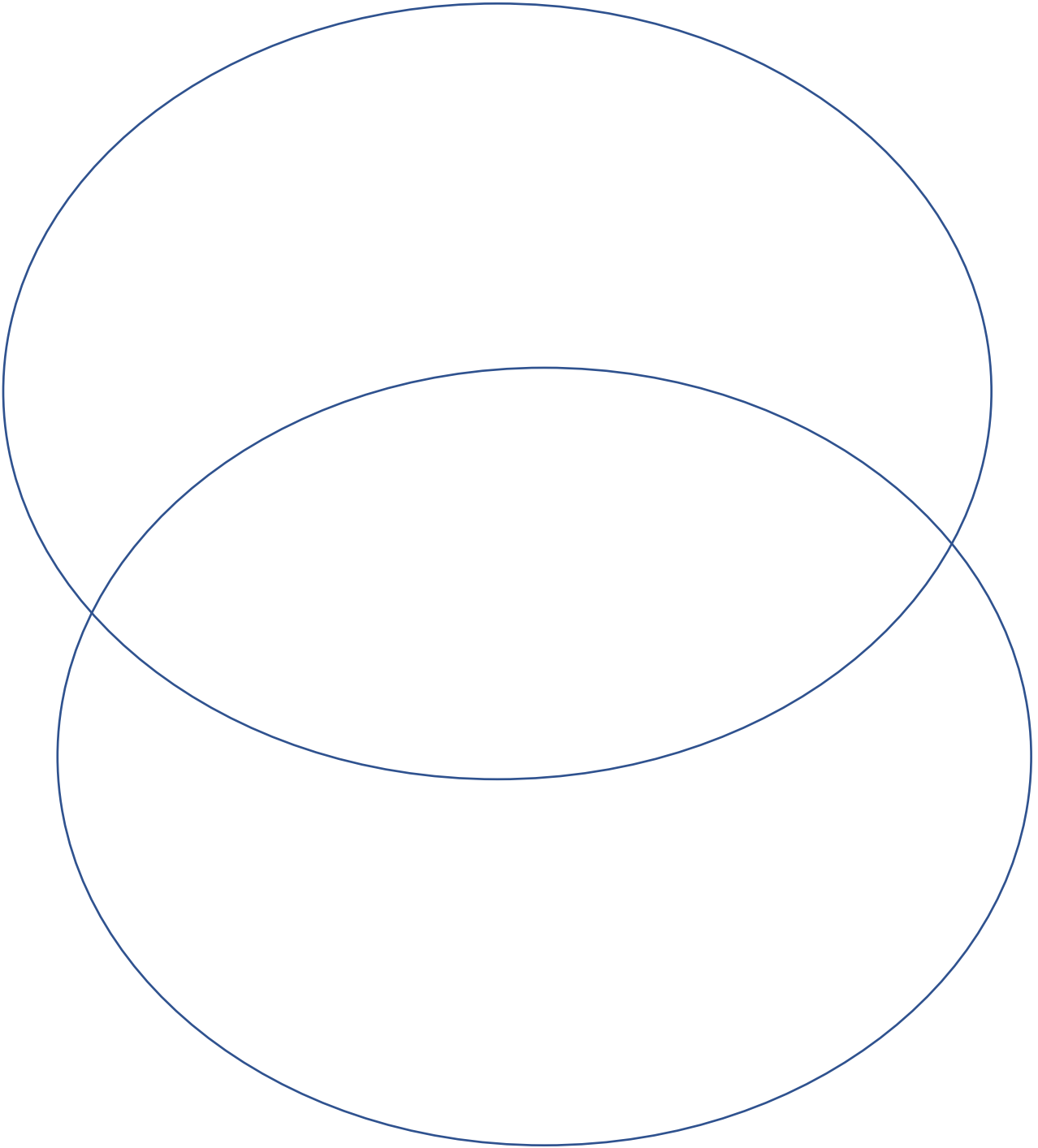
political contribution, social contribution, economic contribution, vote, volunteer, taxes

1	2	3	4
<p>Presentation shows that student did not understand the vocabulary or concepts.</p> <p>Student does not ask for help.</p> <p>Presentation is incomplete.</p>	<p>Presentation begins to show understanding, but parts may be unclear or confusing.</p> <p>Presentation correctly uses some required vocabulary words.</p> <p>Presentation has many errors and appears rushed.</p>	<p>Presentation shows clear understanding of how responsible citizens can <u>contribute to their communities politically, socially, and economically</u> and how responsible citizens can <u>contribute to the well-being of the environment.</u></p> <p>Presentation correctly uses all required vocabulary words.</p> <p>Presentation is clear and contains few errors.</p>	<p>Presentation meets requirements for a 3.</p> <p>In addition, presentation evaluates the value of why being a responsible citizen is important to a healthy society.</p>

Appendix 3

Stanza	“I, Too “ By Langston Hughes	Paraphrase
1.	I, too, sing America.	
2.	<p>I I am the darker brother. They send me to eat in the kitchen When company comes, But I laugh, And eat well, And grow strong.</p>	
3.	<p>Tomorrow, I'll be at the table When company comes. Nobody'll dare Say to me, “Eat in the kitchen,” Then.</p>	
4.	<p>Besides, They'll see how beautiful I am And be ashamed—</p>	
5.	I, too, am America.	

Poetry Comparison Activity



Still I Rise by Maya Angelou

Amari Explains a Frown to Her Little Brother

African American Poetry Project

The Objective

1. Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of an American poet through studying one specific poet's life, the literary period in which he/she lived, his/her style of writing, and his/her influence on American poetry.

The Poets

Gwendolyn Brooks
Nikki Giovanni
WEB Du Bois
Elizabeth Alexander

Alice Walker
Claude McKay
Phyllis Wheatley
Rita Dove

The Research:

You will need to visit our media center and /or any other nearby library to look for articles and books about your poet as well as his/her poetry itself. Read through as many of the poems as possible and read about the poet's life as well as what other critics have said about his/her work.

Sources:

These (as well as others) are in our media center; the local libraries may also have additional resources.

- Encyclopedia
- Internet
- Audio- Visual Aids - Videos - Tapes / record

The Project:

You will create a ONE-PAGE document that provides the class with a basic understanding of your poet and his/her work. Be sure to make whatever you do in an easy-to-read format. You do NOT need to include a works cited with this document, since that will be included with both your research paper. Please include the following pieces:

How the author's poetry was influenced by BOTH the author's personal history AND the literary movement of the era.

The common themes AND styles of the author as reflected in his/her writing.

- Picture of the poet
- Biographical information (birth, education, family, death (if deceased)) - Key events of the time period in which the author wrote
- Major themes in writing
- Most famous works
- Literary period – include other famous authors from the same period

List of Materials for Classroom Use

Materials for Students and Teachers

Computers

Students are to submit will use computers to submit assignments.

Printed Out Copies of the poems for review / annotating

Printed materials will be used for closed reading activities.

Resources for Teachers

Texts

Woke

This book contains many poems that are relevant to our current time period. Students will enjoy these poems as they touch topics such as forgiveness, racism, and justice. The author uses several poets to create a compilation of relevant poetry.

The Spoken Word Revolution: Slam, Hip-Hop & the Poetry of a New Generation

This book contains some history on spoken word and how spoken word has grown to a recognized art form. This book also contains pieces of spoken word that are written and a CD for pieces of spoken word that are being performed.

Poetry for Young People

Langston Hughes is a well-respected poet, who has published over 16 volumes of poetry. This book contains many of his most powerful pieces of poetry. Twenty-five of his poems are located within this text, they range from light-hearted to very serious.

Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou is a well-respected poet, who has published over 20 poems. This book contains many of her most powerful pieces of poetry. Twenty-five of her poems are located within this text, they range from light-hearted to very serious.

The Cultural Politics of Slam Poetry Race, Identity, and the Performance of Popular Verse in America

This book contains some history on spoken word and how spoken word has grown to a recognized art form. This book also contains pieces of spoken word that are written and a CD for pieces of spoken word that are being performed.

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