

Title: *Diverse Psychological Effects of the Civil Rights Movement*

Possible Subject Area(s);

- ✓ Ideal for an interdisciplinary course such as *American Studies* (Literature & History)
- ✓ American Literature
- ✓ American History
- ✓ Psychology

Overview:

This unit will allow students to explore, via a digital classroom learning unit, the reading of a short fiction story by Alice Walker, and the writing of a paper that is at least five paragraphs long that explores the different psychological effects that black Americans may have emotionally sustained as a result of the Civil Rights Movement.

Students will begin the unit by researching the Civil Rights Movement and reading articles about people who were affected by it. The unit will begin with students filling in a KWL chart regarding what they know about the Civil Rights Movement and the feelings that were evoked in individuals (of either or both races). Students will read through three articles, preferably one on an American (black or white) who was heavily involved in Civil Rights, one about a black American who *was not* heavily involved in the particulars of the movement itself, yet explains how s/he was directly affected by the movement, and finally one article about a white American who *was not* heavily involved in the particulars of the movement itself, yet also explains how s/he was directly affected by the movement. After reading the articles, students will go back to the KWL chart to fill in any new information they've learned.

When the KWL chart has been filled in, students will then read the story "Every Day Use" by Alice Walker, a story that brings a young woman named Dee, who has, paradoxically, relinquished her given name for a more traditionally symbolic African-American name: one that is not very symbolic when readers look at how Dee is living in her present. This young woman wants some of her mother's African-American heir-looms, yet does not realize what they *truly* mean. After "Every Day Use" has been read, students are to go back to their KWL charts to see if they can fill in any additional information.

On the last day of the unit, students will be invited to write a reaction, based on the research they read in the digital classroom, but most heavily based on the three main characters of Walker's fictional tale to answer the following prompt: **Write a critical review of Alice Walker's short story "Every Day Use," explaining whether you think the story is an effective way of exploring natural human behavior. In particular, you should focus on the different behaviors and ideas that may have stemmed from the Civil Rights Movement and what the results were.**

The lesson ends with the students' papers being peer-evaluated and finally graded by the teacher, using the rubrics that are found below. This Learning Unit is focused on the **Eleventh Grade, College Preparatory** level, yet can be easily modified by the adept pedagogue.

Essential Understanding:

- ✓ What the Civil Rights Movement was all about
- ✓ How different people were affected (or not affected) by the outcome of The Civil Rights Movement

- ✓ That different people evolve in different ways – some stay with their roots, while others try to fly free but in the end we are all still the same
- ✓ That some people think they have adapted to society's expectations, yet when one looks closer there is little to no change at all
- ✓ That everyone is affected by social and/or political change in different ways
- ✓ That writing critical essays which include personal opinions can help to further explain a subject matter

Essential Questions:

- ✓ What was The Civil Rights Movement?
- ✓ Who is Alice Walker?
- ✓ Why is it important to take a look at how history affects different individuals in various ways?
- ✓ What is the key to holding on to one's identity?
- ✓ How can I explore and explain the different psychological takes on the outcome of the Civil Rights Movement?

CT Standards:

Content Standard 1: Reading and Responding

Students will read and respond in individual, literal, critical and evaluative ways to literary, informational and persuasive texts.

- a. describe the thoughts, opinions and questions that arise as they read, view or listen to a text, demonstrate a basic understanding of the text, and identify inconsistencies and ambiguities
- b. examine the fit between the text and prior knowledge by reconciling differences, extracting clues or evidence, making inferences, drawing conclusions, predicting events, inferring motives and generalizing beyond the text
- l. use the literary elements of a text (theme, symbolism, imagery, conflict, etc.) to draw conclusions about a text

Content Standard 3: Applying English Language Conventions

Students will apply the conventions of standard English language in oral and written communication.

- a. demonstrate command of capitalization, punctuation, usage and spelling skills, and utilize effective strategies and appropriate resources for proof-reading and editing
- e. draw conclusions regarding the evolution of language and how it influences and reflects societal changes

Content Standard 4: Exploring and Responding to Texts

Students will use the language arts to explore and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

- a. read, view and listen to key works of contemporary literature and create responses that examine the works' principal elements.
- d. determine the various influences on authors and analyze the impact of those influences on the text
- f. read, listen to and view literary texts and identify and explain the human experiences they convey
- h. read classic and contemporary literature to determine political and social ideas which characterize those works

j. read and respond to both classic and contemporary texts to examine themes central to the American experience and those portrayed in the range of traditional literature

Objectives:

- The student will research what the Civil Rights Movement was and comprehend how different groups of people were affected by it
- The student will read and analyze a short story that explores only a fragment of the possible psychological aftermaths of the Civil Rights Movement. Students will read and analyze this story in order to write a critical response to the ideas brought forth by the author.
- The student will write a critical essay that is at least five paragraphs in length that is a culmination of their research, reading, and psychological analysis of the story's characters

Materials Needed:

- ✓ Access to computers with internet access – ideally a *digital classroom* will work best with guidance including, but not limited to an electronic copy of a KWL chart and a step-by-step guide to writing a five paragraph critical essay
- ✓ Access to a copy of Alice Walker's "Every Day Use"
- ✓ Access to computers with a word processing program
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Peer-editing tool
- ✓ Quiz
- ✓ An MLA guide
- ✓ Rubric

Suggested Activities/Procedures:

Day 1

- ✓ Students are to fill in a KWL chart based on what they know of the Civil Rights Movement like the one below:

Complete the form below as you study The American Civil Rights Movement

What I know about The American Civil Rights Movement	What I want to know about The American Civil Rights Movement	What I have learned about The American Civil Rights Movement
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- ✓ Students are then to read and take notes (on a sheet of notebook paper) on 2-3 on-line articles that deal with people who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement and/or places that were central figures in the Civil Rights Movement. Some articles/information that may be helpful can be found in the web sites below:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart9.html>

<http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/special/mlk/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/10/books/review/crouch.html>

<http://www.grandtimes.com/rosa.html>

<http://www.ardemgaz.com/prev/central/>

Homework: Should be started in class if time allows

- ✓ Read the short story “Every Day Use” by Alice Walker, an author strongly affected by the Civil Rights Movement.

Link to short story:

http://www.bow.k12.nh.us/jmcdermott/everyday_use_by_alice_walker.htm

Day 2

- ✓ When students arrive to class, they will be required to answer a brief reading comprehension quiz that will prove that they completed the homework and/or comprehended the story (see below).
- ✓ Students are then to go back to their KWL charts and fill in any more information that they’ve gained through the reading of the short story, adding any information they hopefully feel enlightened about.
- ✓ The teacher will then lead a brief discussion of the story, leading students in the discussion by asking questions that in particular surround why each of the characters act in the ways that they do. In addition, the teacher will ask the students to tie the story into what they learned about the Civil Rights Movement and discuss possible psychological connections between the movement and the fictional characters’ behaviors.
- ✓ The students will then be required to begin writing their critical essays that will answer the following question:

Write a critical review of Alice Walker’s short story “Every Day Use,” explaining whether you think the story is an effective way of exploring natural human behavior. In particular, you should focus on the different behaviors and ideas that may have stemmed from the Civil Rights Movement and what the results were.

- ✓ Students should have prior knowledge of what makes a good essay, yet will be reminded of the following ideas via outline:
 - I. Introduction
 - A. “Hook” needed, possibly an anecdote
 - B. Briefly explain the story
 - i. provide the author’s full name
 - ii. provide the title of the short story, documented properly in “quotes”
 - C. Thesis statement needed
 - i. which speaks directly to the question being asked
 - ii. which makes a direct correlation between a character and the aftermath
 - II. Body Paragraphs
 - A. Begin with a topic sentence
 - B. Stick to the topic of the essay
 - C. Provide examples (direct or indirect, i.e. documented or otherwise)
 - D. End the paragraph by wrapping up and tying into the thesis statement
 - III. Conclusion
 - A. Restate thesis in a non-obvious way
 - B. Make a broad generalization about the subject matter
 - C. Leave your reader reeling from your “punch,” i.e. *hit hard with your words to*

make an impact/lasting impression.

Homework:

- ✓ Students should finish the rough draft of their essays and be prepared to peer-edit before finishing the final draft in class the next class meeting.

Day 3

- ✓ When students arrive to class, they should be assigned to sit with a friend (assigned by student or teacher). The two students are to take at least 20 minutes to peer edit each other's papers. Students are to use the Peer Editing Tool that is provided below in order to complete this task.
- ✓ Students are then to take their papers back, read their revisions and clarify vague marks with their peer tutors.
- ✓ Students are then to revise their papers, using the paper's rubric that is provided below. Rubrics must be handed in with the paper and should be self-graded in the space provided.
- ✓ Finally, students are to go back to their KWL charts one last time and fill in any additional information
- ✓ Papers are to be turned in, stapled in the following order:
 - Essay (top)
 - KWL Chart
 - Peer Editing Tool
 - Rubric (bottom)

Homework:

- ✓ Teachers should assign reading or research to begin the next learning unit

Suggested Assessment/Evaluation

As provided below, and explained above, students will be evaluated via:

- A reading comprehension quiz
- A peer-editing Tool
- A rubric for their essays that are both self-scored and teacher-scored

Possible Extensions/Resources

- ✓ If time permits, the unit can be greatly enhanced by researching Alice Walker's life and incorporating her own thoughts and feelings about the Civil Rights Movement into their papers
- ✓ A possible extension of this exercise would be for students to read another short story that regards life after the American Civil Rights Movement. Students may then be able to write a compare/contrast essay regarding the outcomes of the characters in each of the stories.
- ✓ Students can begin by reading "Every Day Use" by Alice Walker, and then researching the Civil Rights Movement. This approach would be interesting, as students are not exposed to the movement thus are not analyzing on a deeper level as they read the story

prior to completing their research, but instead are analyzing on a deeper level when they are doing their research on Civil Rights and those affected by the movement.

Reading Comprehension Quiz:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz
"Every Day Use"
By Alice Walker

Directions: Answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability. All answers should be written in complete sentences.

1. From what point of view is the story being told?
2. The narrator tells the reader that Maggie will be nervous until Dee leaves, why do you suppose this is?
3. Dee and Maggie's mother can be described as what? Provide an answer for both her physical appearance and her ability to be a strong mother.
4. Maggie is scarred and walks with a limp, why?
5. When Dee arrives at her mother's house, who does she bring with her?
6. When Dee's mother asks Wangero where Dee is, what is Wangero's response? (*hint: she explains that it has a direct correlation with the people who were guilty of oppression*)
7. After dinner, what was Dee looking for in her mother's trunk?
8. Will Maggie ever get married?
9. Maggie tells her mother that Dee can have the heir-looms. Why?
10. When Dee is leaving she makes a very ironic comment to her mother – what comment does she make to her mother regarding heritage?

Peer Editing Tool:

Editor's Name: _____

Writer's Name: _____

Element is fine (if this is the case, check this column off)	Element Being Evaluated	Peer Editor's Comments:
	Essay is at least five paragraphs long	
	Intro has a hook	
	Intro introduces the issue/problem clearly	
	Intro thesis is provided and is clear	
	Body Paragraphs – each has a topic sentence that is followed throughout the paragraph and relates to the thesis statement	
	Body Paragraphs – prove that the writer understands the issue & story at hand	
	Body Paragraphs – an example is given in each that supports the thesis statement	
	Conclusion – restates the thesis in a non-obvious way	
	Conclusion – makes a broad generalization regarding the subject matter	
	Conclusion – leaves the reader thinking	

	Mechanics – spelling, grammar, and punctuation problems?	
	Mechanics – proper pronouns are used – writing to the correct audience, i.e. no “you” is used, referring to the reader	
	Miscellaneous Errors	

Essay Rubric:

Scoring Rubric

PLEASE USE THIS AS YOUR GUIDE AS YOU WRITE YOUR ESSAY!!! It will only pay off in the long run. As always, this rubric MUST BE HANDED IN WITH YOUR PAPER or there will be ten points deducted from the total of points.

Element:	Points Earned Out Of:
I. Format	
C. Title Page/MLA headings properly set up	4 3 2 1 0
1. last name & page, etc.	
D. MLA setup is correct throughout: double spacing, Times, New Roman, 12 pt. font, etc.	6 5 4 3 2 1 0
II. Style and Structure	
A. Grammar usage	6 5 4 3 2 1 0
B. Diction/word choice	6 5 4 3 2 1 0
1. words are not too eloquent	
2. words are not too elementary	
C. Sentence structure	6 5 4 3 2 1 0
1. complete sentences	
D. Organization	7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
1. Paragraphs and ideas flow	
III. Evidence & Support	
B. Quality & appropriateness of examples	10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
C. Adaptation - integration of examples into paper	7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
1. aren't "thrown" in	
2. relate to paragraph's topic	

IV: Content (25 points)

A. Quality of the thesis	11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
B. Demonstration of thesis	11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
C. Logic, clarity	11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
1. the paper has a message and/or argument	

V: Introduction, Conclusion, & Body ¶

A. Introduction	5 4 3 2 1 0
1. Hook	
2. Proper introduction to topic	
3. Thesis present	
B. Body ¶s	5 4 3 2 1 0
1. Have topic sentences	
2. Provide examples	
3. Closes with tie to thesis	
C. Conclusion	5 4 3 2 1 0
1. Restates thesis	
2. Makes a generalization on the topic	
3. Hits the reader with a strong point at the end	