Sophomore Honors English Unit Plan: Richard Wright’s *Black Boy*

**Unit Summary:** Students will engage in pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities pertaining to the autobiography Black Boy by Richard Wright. Students will learn about the Jim Crow Era, read the autobiography, and write an autobiographical incident on an experience from their past.

**Unit Purpose:** The purpose of this unit is for students to develop an understanding of the autobiography, connotation & denotation as it relates to author tone, difficult vocabulary, racism, & the Jim Crow Era, the stereotypes afforded African Americans during the early to mid-1900’s, and the values of the author vs. the values students themselves have.

**Essential Questions:**

1. Why is it important for people from varying cultures to write autobiographies about their experiences?
2. In the face of adversity, what causes some individuals to rise from the ashes while others fail?
3. How is the culture we live in important to our identity?
4. What is the importance of using literary devices like tone when you’re writing?

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| **Pre-Reading Assignments & Activities** | **Formative & Summative Assessments** |
| Jim Crow Era Power Point Notes   * Jim Crow Genesis & Background: Clip from *The Great Debaters* * Black Face & Bamboozled * Emmett Till: Video of cousin’s account | For three class participation/class work grades, students will take power point notes on the bulleted topics, watch clips, view pictures, and engage in discussions on the Jim Crow Era |
| Jim Crow Reflection | As a summative assessment and from the perspective of an African American living during the Jim Crow Era, students will reflect on their character’s experiences in the racist south |
| Connotation, Denotation, & Tone Activity | For two CP/CW grades, students learn about connotation, denotation, & tone through worksheets and class discussions |
| Tone Activity: Julian Curry on the use of the “N” word | For a CP/CW grade, students will actively read the Julian Curry poem using the I’s &/or C’s method, reflect on the use of the “N” word, and view the poem |
| Article on Spike Lee’s *Do the Right Thing* | For a homework grade, students will actively read an article on Spike Lee’s *Do the Right Thing* using the I’s &/or C’s Method |
| Stereotypes: Clips, Activity, & Discussion | For a CP/CW grade, students will learn the dictionary definition of stereotype, discuss the implications of judging people based on stereotypes, and watch a clip from Spike Lee’s *Do the Right Thing* and discuss stereotyping in terms of the clip |
| **During Reading Assignments** | **Formative & Summative Assessments** |
| During Reading Logs | Students will receive one homework grade for each log completed. Each log will focus on: Summary of the chapter(s), tone, theme, and a reaction or reflection on what they read |
| Chapter Quizzes | Students will receive quiz grades on a 100-point scale on the day a reading log is due. All quizzes are content-based. |
| Vocabulary Quizzes | Students will take three three-part vocabulary quizzes complete with a matching section, a categories section, and a using words from different angles section |
| Tone Excerpt Analysis (2) | For summative assessment grades, students will complete 2 tone analyses. Each analysis will focus on an excerpt from the autobiography *Black Boy* and the author’s tone toward a specific subject, a character, or his surroundings |
| Tone Paragraph Quiz | Upon completing the tone excerpt analyses, students will write a short paragraph in the open response format, analyzing Richard Wright’s tone toward the Jim Crow south. |
| *Black Boy* in class Mini-Lessons | For CP/CW grades, students will discuss the following through reflections, blog posts, or class discussions (essence of conflict):   * Familial/Friend/Co-worker relations – Blog Post TBD * Racism & Identity – Blog Post TBD * Religion – Granny’s 10 Commandments * Reading/Knowledge – *from* “Hunger of Memory” vs. *Black Boy* |
| “The Almost White Boy” Mini Unit | **Pre-Reading Activities:**   * “Team Light Skinned” Poem * Vocabulary Activity * Issues of Identity Pre-Reading Assignment: One Drop to be the Color Black   **During Reading Activities:**   * During Reading Questions * Actively read “The Almost White Boy” using the I’s &/or C’s Method   **Post Reading Activities:**   * “The Almost White Boy” Graphing Activity * Tone Blog Post |
| **Post Reading Assignments** | **Formative & Summative Assessments** |
| *Black Boy* & *from* “Hunger of Memory” OR | Students will write an open response as a summative assessment, comparing and contrasting *Black Boy* and *from* “Hunger of Memory” |
| Compare & Contrast excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* & “Malcolm is ‘Bout More than Wearing a Cap” poem in an open response | Students will receive a summative assessment grade for completing the open response |
| The Autobiographical Incident & Cover | For a summative assessment grade, students will write an autobiographical account of a circumstance they experienced and learned from |
| “Rising from the Ashes” Group Project | * In small groups and for a summative assessment grade, students will chose one person from history, African American or otherwise, and chronicle their “rise from the ashes” in an aesthetically pleasing power point and presentation. * For a CP/CW grade, students in the audience will take notes and ask questions for each presentation |
| *Black Boy* Unit Exam | As a summative assessment, students will complete a unit exam on the autobiography’s content, vocabulary, & analysis |
| *Black Boy* Core Work Index Card | Students will receive a class participation/classwork grade for completing this review of the novel for unit exam and state exam purposes. |

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| **Opener Samples** | **Closer Samples** |
| * Pop Quiz Examples: What is tone? Provide an example of a word that possesses both connotative and denotative properties. * KWL: Write down 1 thing you know about the Jim Crow Era, 1 thing you want to know, and 1 thing you learned about the Jim Crow Era | * Summary of the day’s lesson * Reactions to class material through brief discussions and quick writes * Status Reports |

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| **BHS Literacy Objectives** |
| **Reading:** For content (both literal and inferential), to apply pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading strategies to all reading assignments, including determining purpose and pre-learning vocabulary, to research a topic, to gather information, to comprehend an argument, to determine the main idea of a passage, to understand a concept and construct meaning, and to expand one’s experience |
| **Writing:** To take notes, to explain one’s thinking, to argue a thesis and support ones thinking, to compare and contrast, to write an open response, to generate a response to what one has read, viewed, and heard, to convey one’s thinking in complete sentences, and to develop an expository essay with a formal structure |
| **Speaking:** To convey one’s thinking in complete sentences, to interpret a passage orally, to participate in class discussion, to make an oral presentation to one’s class & peers, to respond to what one has read, viewed, or heard, and to communicate in a manner that allows one to be both heard and understood |
| **Reasoning:** To create, interpret, and explain a table, chart, or graph, to identify a pattern, explain a pattern and/or make a prediction based on a pattern, to explain the logic of an argument or solution, and to use analogies and/or evidence to support one’s thinking |

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| **Common Core Standards** | |
| College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for **Reading** | **Key Ideas & Details:**   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 or themes 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 & Structure:**   1. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning. 2. Assess how purpose shapes the content and style of a text. 3. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.   **Integration of Knowledge & Ideas:**   1. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. 2. 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. 3. Analyze the meaning of literary texts by drawing on knowledge of literary concepts & genres. 4. 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 & Level of Text Complexity:**   1. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. |
| College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for **Writing** | **Text Types & Purposes:**   1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. 3. Write narratives to develop real experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. 4. Write personal reflections that demonstrate awareness of literary concepts and genres.   **Production & Distribution of Writing:**   1. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate for the task, purpose, and audience 2. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning. 3. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce writing and to interact and collaborate with others.   **Research to Build and Present Knowledge:**   1. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. 2. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. 3. Draw evidence from literary and informational texts to support analysis and reflection.   **Range of Writing:**   1. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single siting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. |
| College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for **Speaking & Listening** | **Comprehension & Collaboration:**   1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. 2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. 3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.   **Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas**   1. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. 2. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. 3. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. |
| College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for **Language** | **Conventions of Standard English:**   1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.   **Knowledge of Language:**   1. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. 2. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate. 3. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. |