

UNIT OVERVIEW

Unit Title	Literacy and Liberation
Unit Length	4 weeks; 10 lessons
Grade Levels/Subjects	9-12; African American Literature, African American History
Unit Overview	<p>This unit aims to help students understand the relationship between literacy and liberation. Through the examination of multiple modes of literacy, students will work to expand their working definition of literacy. Further, students will have the opportunity to analyze both historical and present-day examples of how literacy has been used to empower and to advocate for social justice.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this unit and following the completion of a student-generated community literacy action project, we expect that students will be able to recognize the power of literacy in their own lives and how it may be used as a form of liberation to empower themselves and their communities.</p> <p>This unit will also help students to interrogate their own literate identities and what it means to be working for liberation in those identities. Here, students become what Lorena Escoto Germán describes as “researchers, ethnographers, advocates, and writers of community affairs,” empowering them as activists in the present and in the future.</p> <p>To see the unit in action, watch this video. The video includes lecture and class discussion clips, as well as teacher and student reflections on the unit.</p>

<p>Objectives & Outcomes</p>	<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Engage in disciplinary-specific thinking to understand and address issues of equity, power, and justice. → Examine and explain the relationship that literacy has to the formation and perpetuation of culture and how literacy has the capacity to empower people to make meaningful choices and decisions for themselves and their communities. → Examine what liberation is and how literacy adds to one’s ability to act as a social change agent. → Consider languaging and the use of language as a source of liberation, connection from past to present. → Engage in communication and problem-solving about community issues, concerns, and activities.
<p>Standards</p>	<p>Michigan K-12 Standards for Social Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → P1.2 Interpret primary and secondary source documents for point of view, context, bias, and frame of reference or perspective. → 2.1 Apply methods of inquiry, including asking and answering compelling and supporting questions, to investigate social science problems. → 6.1.4 Growth and Change: Explain the social, political, economic, and cultural shifts taking place in the United States at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. → 7.1.1 The Twenties: explain and evaluate the significance of the social, cultural, and political changes and tensions in the “Roaring Twenties.” <p>Learning For Justice Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identity: Students will develop language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups. ● Diversity: Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified. ● Justice: Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics.

- **Action:** Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and will evaluate what strategies are most effective.

State Disciplinary Literacy Essentials

→ **Essential Practice 1: Problem-Based Instruction**

- ◆ Engages students in developing and asking questions, as well as planning inquiries.
- ◆ Engages students in disciplinary-specific thinking.
- ◆ Helps students make sense of problems at different scales, persevere in solving them, or making conjectures about solutions.
- ◆ Helps students see connections to their lives and identities by engaging in diverse real-world and issue based investigations
- ◆ Creates opportunities for students to enact literate identities connected to their learning by attending to issues of equity, power, and justice.
- ◆ Provides opportunities for students to make choices in their reading, writing, and communication.
- ◆ Offers regular opportunities for students to collaborate with peers in reading and writing, such as through small-group discussion of texts on questions of interest, and opportunities to write within group projects.
- ◆ Differentiates instructional processes and product expectations based on frequent, formative, growth-oriented feedback that affirms high academic expectations and support for all students.

→ **Essential Practice 9: Community Networking to Tap Into Available Funds of Knowledge in Support of Developing Students’ Content Knowledge and Identities**

- ◆ Help students connect and build on in-school and out-of-school literacy practices and identities:
 - Connect learning to family, cultural, and community histories.
 - Connect to youth and popular culture activities and concerns.
- ◆ Address community activities, issues, or concerns and engage students in communication and problem solving about them.
- ◆ Leverage students’ literacies, learning, and knowledge to benefit their school, district, and/or community (e.g., peer education, research fairs, concerts, demonstrations and exhibitions, student-to-student mentoring, service learning).
- ◆ Enable students to communicate conclusions to authentic audiences.

	<p>◆ Connect to and engage with discipline-related activities and spaces in local communities (e.g., local music groups, hobby groups, museums, universities, and libraries)</p>
<p>Facilitation Resources</p>	<p>Resources from <i>The 1619 Project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Late 1773: poem by Eve L. Ewing → “Traffic” by Kevin Kruse → “The Birth of American Music” by Wesley Morris <p>External Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We Do This ‘Til We Free Us by Mariame Kaba (quotes provided in the lessons below) → “The Importance of the Act of Reading” by Paulo Freire → “A History of the Detroit Study Club” by Lillian E. Johnson, from the Detroit Public Library Digital Collections → “A ‘Forgotten History’ of How the U.S. Government Segregated America” from NPR → “Phillis Wheatley’s Existence Was Dangerous to an Idea the US was Founded On” from the <i>Washington Post</i> → “History Reconsidered” by Clint Smith → CodedSpirituals from PBS → “3 Ways to Speak English,” a TED Talk by Jamila Lyiscott → “How Hip-Hop Taught My Students to Think Critically,” a TED Talk by Jamila Lyiscott → “Whitmer Settled the Detroit Literacy Lawsuit. What It Means (and What It Doesn’t)” by Nancy Kaffer for the <i>Detroit Free Press</i> → “Detroit Students Have a Constitutional Right to Literacy, Court Rules” by Dana Goldstein for the <i>New York Times</i> → “Students From Detroit’s Worst Schools Fight for Fair Access to Literacy” from CBS Mornings
<p>Performance Task</p>	<p>Based on their learning throughout the unit, students will develop a creative product that demonstrates their views of what literacy is and what its relationship is to liberation. The product students complete is up to them, or may be determined in consultation with the teacher. It could be a painting, a poem, a video, a dance, a podcast, a collage, a song—almost anything their hearts desire. The expectation is that all</p>

	<p>students will be able to creatively detail the connections literacy has to the ability of people to advocate for their own personal, familial, and community needs.</p> <p>Regardless of the form/product students choose, they must all be sure to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Definition of literacy→ Examples of types of literacy→ Explanation of how literacy is related to ideas of liberation→ Evidence from texts that have been used in this unit
Assessment/Evaluation	<p>Formative: Students will participate in oral discussion and written reflection throughout the unit. Examples of classwork include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Word clouds on literacy and liberation (one word cloud to start the unit, and one word cloud at the unit’s conclusion to evaluate learning and growth)→ Individual blackout poems using an excerpt from Thomas Jefferson's review of Wheatley's work. Students' poems respond to Jefferson's critique and champion the relationship between literacy and liberation.→ A collaborative poem about a topic on which students believe others should be literate→ Researched maps of their neighborhoods→ Several graphic organizers, note-catchers, and thinking routine exercises <p>Summative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Multigenre Project Prewriting Guide worksheet for students [.pdf]→ Culminating Assignment instructions for students [.pdf]

UNIT PACING/DAILY LESSONS

Pacing	Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson	Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)	Lesson / Activities	Lesson Materials
<p><i>Week 1</i></p> <p>How do my literate identities intersect with issues of power, access, and equity in my school, community, and world?</p>				
Day 1	<p>Excerpts from <i>We Do This 'Til We Free Us</i> by Mariame Kaba [.pdf]</p> <p>Excerpts from <i>We Do This 'Til We Free Us</i> by Mariame Kaba [.docx]</p> <p>(Full book available for purchase from Haymarket Books at this link)</p>	<p>What is liberation and how do I define liberation?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quotes from <i>We Do This 'Til We Free Us</i> will be posted around the room. Students will be given post-it notes and silently respond to the ways in which the quotes relate to or define liberation. 2. Teacher will guide students through a share-out around the thoughts they posted during the gallery walk. 3. Teacher will then transition students to the creation of a personal preamble to ground their work using the slides to introduce preamble writing. In this context, a preamble is an introductory statement that clearly defines your identity, purpose, and commitment. 4. Students should write an individual preamble, responding to 3-5 of the following 	<p>Preamble writing slides [.pptx]</p> <p>Preamble writing slides [.pdf]</p> <p>Printed copies of the quote excerpts from <i>We Do This 'Til We Free This</i> for a gallery walk</p>

			<p>questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Who are you? What do you value? → How do you express yourself? → What is the purpose and power of my leadership / advocacy? → Who will you draw strength from? → What do you commit to? What actions will you take? → What will be your legacy? <p>5. After students have written their own preambles, have them work together in small groups to create collaborative preambles.</p> <p>6. If time permits, use the group preambles to create a whole class preamble.</p>	
<p>Day 2</p>	<p>“Students From Detroit’s Worst Schools Fight for Fair Access to Literacy” from CBS Mornings</p> <p>“Whitmer Settled the Detroit Literacy Lawsuit. What It Means (and What It Doesn’t)” by Nancy Kaffer for the <i>Detroit Free Press</i></p> <p>“Detroit Students Have a Constitutional Right to Literacy, Court Rules” by Dana Goldstein for the <i>New York Times</i></p>	<p>What is literacy and how do I define literacy?</p> <p>Do all people have a right to literacy?</p>	<p>1. Engage students in a Think-Pair-Share discussion around how we define literacy.</p> <p>During the share-out portion, use Mentimeter, or another application, to create a word cloud of key words/phrases that define literacy.</p> <p>2. Students view the CBS Mornings video on the Detroit Literacy Lawsuit and read the related article from the Detroit Free Press.</p> <p>3. Teacher facilitates a fishbowl discussion around the essential question: Do all people have a right to literacy?</p> <p>4. After engaging in the fishbowl, students will</p>	<p>Mentimeter: Word Cloud Generator</p> <p>Fishbowl directions from Facing History</p> <p>Debate Team Carousel [docx]</p> <p>Debate Team Carousel [pdf]</p>

			begin to fill out the debate carousel document , which will be a living document that students will add to throughout the unit, and use to craft their final projects.	
Day 3	“The Importance of the Act of Reading” by Paulo Freire	How does literacy live in the world?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers will review previous conversations with students, reminding them of the discussion around literacy being a right. 2. Teachers will divide students into 3-7 groups, depending on class size and student reading stamina. 3. Teachers will jigsaw the Freire article with students. Each group will be given a section of the article that they are responsible for unpacking for the class. 4. Students will complete a summary of the key points in their section of the reading and share with the group. 5. After reading, summarizing and hearing the key points of the Freire article, students engage in a Circle Write around these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What is literacy? → What is the intersection of literacy and liberation? 	Circle Write Protocol Directions [.pptx] Circle Write Protocol Directions [.pdf]

<p>Day 4</p>	<p>Late 1773: poem by Eve L. Ewing from <i>The 1619 Project</i></p> <p>“Phillis Wheatley’s Existence Was Dangerous to an Idea the US was Founded On” from the <i>Washington Post</i></p> <p>“History Reconsidered” by Clint Smith</p> <p>Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson’s Review of Phillis Wheatley’s Work [.pdf]</p> <p>Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson’s Review of Phillis Wheatley’s Work [.docx]</p>	<p>How has literacy been shared through the written and spoken word?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will view the Youtube clip on Phillis Wheatley and the Clint Smith poem. 2. Students will engage in a turn and talk reflecting on their key takeaways from the videos. 3. Discuss as a class: Why was Wheatley’s existence dangerous? 4. Students read “Late 1773” by Eve L. Ewing. 5. Students will answer questions according to the four-step poetry analysis document. 6. Students use the quote from Thomas Jefferson’s review of Wheatley’s work to create a blackout poem. Their poem should be a response to his review. (For more guidance on writing blackout poetry, see this link.) 	<p>How-to: Blackout Poetry from Arapahoe Libraries</p> <p>Four-step Poetry Protocol [.pdf]</p> <p>Four-step Poetry Protocol [.docx]</p>
<p>Day 5</p>	<p>“Ten Lessons from Black Literary Societies” by Dr. Gholdy Muhammad</p> <p>“A History of the Detroit Study Club” by Lillian E. Johnson, from the Detroit Public Library Digital Collections</p>	<p>How has literacy been shared through the written and spoken word?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will explore the purpose and benefit of Black literary societies through reading Dr. Gholdy Muhammad’s “Ten Lessons from Black Literary Societies.” 2. After reading the lessons, students will read the work of a literary society in the area (this could be adapted to fit literary societies in other regions). Students in the Good Trouble team’s classes browsed the documents of the Detroit Study Club in the Detroit Public Library archive. 	<p>Detroit Public Library Digital Archive: Detroit Study Club</p> <p>Document-Based Question: Purposes of the Detroit Study Club [.pdf]</p> <p>Document-Based Question: Purposes of the Detroit Study Club [.docx]</p>

			<p>Students will select 4 primary source documents to read and explore.</p> <p>3. Students will complete the associated DBQ questionnaire, connecting the archived documents and the “Ten Lessons from Black Literary Societies.”</p> <p>4. Students share findings and questions with the class during whole group discussion.</p> <p>5. After reading the documents, students will complete a start, stop, continue protocol discussing the lessons learned on how to build a culture of literacy in the present day.</p>	
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Pacing	Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson	Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)	Lesson / Activities	Lesson Materials
<p><i>Weeks 2-4</i></p> <p>How can I use my literate identities to work for liberation with others in my school, community, and world to address issues of power, access, and equity?</p>				
<p>Days 1 - 2</p>	<p>“3 Ways to Speak English,” a TED Talk by Jamila Lyiscott</p> <p>“U.S. Drug War Shredded In Epic Jay-Z Verse On ‘God Did’ -- Ari Melber's MSNBC Breakdown”</p> <p>“God Did” (Clean) by DJ Khaled</p>	<p>How has literacy been shared through the written and spoken word?</p>	<p>1. Students will view “3 Ways to Speak English” by Jamila Lyiscott and Ari Melber’s piece on Jay-Z. Consider having students listen to the song “God Did” before watching the clip from Ari Melber.</p> <p>After viewing each video, provide an opportunity for students to process and capture their noticings and wonderings independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Noticings and wonderings might be an aha, a question, or a connection. <p>2. Next, students will share their noticings and wonderings with an elbow partner. Partners should take turns sharing their ideas. Partners should discuss how their noticings and wonderings are similar and different.</p> <p>3. Students will then complete the Connect, Extend, Challenge protocol to engage with these resources. Consider having students complete this with a</p>	<p>Connect, Extend, Challenge Protocol from Facing History</p> <p>Optional: Connect, Extend, Challenge Graphic Organizer from Facing History [.pdf]</p> <p>Optional: Connect, Extend, Challenge Graphic Organizer from Facing History [Google Doc]</p> <p>Flip platform</p>

			<p>partner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Connect: How do the ideas and information in this reading / viewing connect to what you already know about how language can be used to empower and disempower people? → Extend: How does this viewing / reading extend or broaden your thinking? → Challenge: How does this viewing / reading challenge or complicate your understanding of language can be used to empower and disempower? What new questions does it raise for you? <p>Allow students to share out key points from their discussion with their partner.</p> <p>4. Teachers will allow students to form groups of 2–4 and create a collaborative poem on a topic they believe should be highlighted (one that people should be literate on).</p> <p>4. Students will write, perform and post pieces on Microsoft Flip (the class will need a Flip account to record/upload their videos).</p>	
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<p>Days 3-4</p>	<p>CodedSpirituals from PBS</p> <p>“The Birth of American Music” by Wesley Morris from <i>The 1619 Project</i></p> <p>“How Hip-Hop Taught My Students to Think Critically,” a TED Talk by Jamila Lyiscott</p>	<p>What is music literacy and in what ways, if any, may it have been a vehicle of liberation for various groups and communities?</p> <p>Why is everyone always stealing Black music?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will complete the first portion of the 3-2-1 Bridge activity in response to the essential questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What is music literacy and in what ways, if any, may it have been a vehicle of liberation for various groups and communities? → Why is everyone always stealing Black music? Students will read “The Birth of American Music” by Wesley Morris from <i>The 1619 Project</i>. While they read, students will fill out the Question-Thought-Insight worksheet. Students will then engage in a Think, Pair, Share protocol focused on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How would you define Black music? Can it even be defined? → Why do you think so many artists have tried to replicate Black music? → How might this imitation impact Black musicians? → The author ends by stating that “Musically, they both know: This land is their land.” What do you think he means? Do you agree? Students will view two Youtube videos, CodedSpirituals and “How Hip-Hop Taught My Students to Think Critically.” 	<p>3-2-1 Bridge protocol from Project Zero</p> <p>Question, Thought, Insight (QTI) worksheet [.pdf]</p> <p>Question, Thought, Insight (QTI) worksheet [.docx]</p>
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			<p>5. Students will complete the second portion of the 3-2-1 Bridge activity in answer to the essential questions, and then fill in their bridge.</p> <p>Students should be prepared to share responses with the class.</p>	
<p>Days 5 - 7</p>	<p>“Traffic” by Kevin Kruse from <i>The 1619 Project</i></p> <p>“A 'Forgotten History' of How the U.S. Government Segregated America” from NPR</p>	<p>What is spatial literacy and in what ways, if any, may it have been a vehicle of liberation for various groups and communities?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin class by engaging students in a collaborative brainstorming session. Consider framing your discussion with this starting question: What does it mean to know your neighborhood? 2. Students will closely read “Traffic” by Kevin Kruse. After reading the essay, students will engage in a “Save the Last Word” protocol. 3. Students complete a map of their neighborhood (or the neighborhood in which their school is located), following the instructions on this handout. 4. Hang student maps on the wall and have them engage in a gallery walk, using sticky notes to point out important observations about their peers’ maps. 5. Have a debrief conversation grounded in the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What patterns or trends did you notice? 	<p>Save the Last Word activity instructions for teachers [.pdf]</p> <p>Mapping the Neighborhood activity instructions for students [.pdf]</p> <p>Mapping the Neighborhood activity instructions for students [.docx]</p> <p>Circle Write: Types of Literacy instructions for students [.pdf]</p>

			<p>→ What connections did you see to the reading?</p> <p>6. To conclude, engage students in a Circle Write, where you will ask them to think about different types of literacy that might exist.</p> <p>7. After the Circle Write is complete, ask students to reflect upon a similar Circle Write that they did at the beginning of the unit. How has their definition of literacy changed?</p>	
Day 8 - 10	Students' work from throughout this unit	<p>Literacy, liberation, and you...</p> <p>What is the relationship between literacy and liberation?</p> <p>How might you express the impact of literacy on your personal liberation or that of a community that you are a part of?</p>	<p>1. Students will revisit the work that they have created over the past 8 days and their original debate carousel documents. Students will add to the document highlighting ways that literacy and liberation intersect for them.</p> <p>2. Teacher will explain final project expectations for a multigenre/multimodal presentation of what they have learned. The instructions for this culminating assignment can be found here.</p> <p>Students may review this genre and subgenre list for inspiration.</p> <p>3. Students will begin to work on compiling and completing documents for presentation over the next day, including</p>	<p>Multigenre Project Prewriting Guide [.pdf]</p> <p>Multigenre Project Prewriting Guide [.docx]</p> <p>Genre and Subgenre List for Multigenre Project</p> <p>Culminating Assignment instructions for students [.pdf]</p> <p>Culminating Assignment instructions for students [.docx]</p>

			<p>the brief prewriting template provided.</p>	
<p>Days 11 - 14</p>		<p>Literacy, liberation, and you...</p> <p>What is the relationship between literacy and liberation?</p> <p>How might you express the impact of literacy and your personal liberation or that of a community that you are a part of?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will work collaboratively to create a word cloud that features their ever-evolving definitions of literacy. 2. Students will work collaboratively to create a word cloud featuring single words or short descriptions of what true liberation looks like. 3. Students will then work to detail the powerful connection literacy has historically had on the ability of any community to elevate itself in myriad ways. They will communicate these ideas via their culminating project. <p>The expectation is that all students will be able to creatively detail the connections literacy has to the ability of people to advocate for their own personal, familial, and community needs. Students will be encouraged to create Flip videos, skits, short podcasts, etc. that detail their findings.</p>	<p>Mentimeter: Word Cloud Generator</p> <p>Culminating Assignment instructions for students [.pdf]</p> <p>Culminating Assignment instructions for students [.docx]</p>