

Rationale

“The way you change human beings and human behavior is through a change in consciousness and that can be effected only through literature, music, poetry—the arts.” Leslie Marmon Silko

Lady Liberty holds a torch to metaphorically guide the travel-wary immigrants to the United States’ welcoming shores. The United States claims to be a country of freedom and liberty, a country where one’s individual strengths and hard work will lead them to success, and not the uncontrollable factors of class, religion, race, and gender. Almost every American will acknowledge this as a truth. As a nation built on immigrants, we are fortunate enough to be rich with cultural difference. In our nation, there are so many different cultures in every urban center, this variety means variety of traditions, experiences, perspectives, and ideas. Every child growing up in an urban center of the United States will experience numerous cross-cultural exchanges, and diversity is certainly something to celebrate.

Multicultural awareness “increases students' capacity for intellectual open-mindedness and global perspective about issues” (Salako, 2013, 303.) If one accepts all the premises presented in paragraph one as true, then one must ask oneself, why does the literature we teach in public schools not reflect the society in which we live? Specifically, shouldn’t the American literature we teach be representative of all the voices composing in the American literary canon? Published in the ALAN review, Marlinda White-Kaulaity writes in defense of Native American literature stating “schools should also teach students about the world—the people they live with, the stories and messages of others, the diversity of cultures. Our students need cross-boundary knowledge, interaction, and experiences to learn how to live in an interdependent world” (2006, 10.) I adamantly believe that these ‘unheard’ voices should be taught in any American Literature

course alongside the likes of Mark Twain and J.D. Salinger. Schools must teach these voices in order to expose our students to a literary canon that truly reflects the world in which we live.

Educators, parents, board members, and anyone else educated in the United States might question a unit founded in multiculturalism because it does not mirror the same education they received. Admittedly, an American literature course without Ernest Hemingway and Mark Twain would limit a student's learning experience. However, educators will do a greater disservice to their students by excluding American authors from different cultural backgrounds. In a 2012 publication of *Education*, Michael Brooks and other authors urge for multicultural education experiences that reflect the growing diversity in schools. In the article, the authors state that "in today's classroom, it is critical for teachers to be able to provide quality instruction to all students that affirms their ethnic, linguistic, and/or socio-economic background. The facilitation and development of cultural competency of pre-service teachers is vital to providing graduates with the skill set necessary to adequately teach all students" (350). Most public schools have a diversified demographic of Caucasian, Latino, African-American, Asian, mixed and international students. Acknowledging the diversity in public schools, one can't help but also acknowledge the problematic paradox of teaching an American literature course containing primarily white male voices. According to data collected and presented in the *2013 Georgia County Guide*, 18.6% of students in public schools are white. Therefore, around 80% of students are from minority backgrounds who will not relate to the white male voice. To widen this scope, if we were to look at the demographic profile of Georgia as a whole, 43.1% of students are white (Carl Vinson Institute.) Essentially, a course that teaches solely literature written by white males, a voice that more than half of public school students cannot relate to, will risk alienating more than half of their students.

To better teach our students and respect the American Literary canon, this unit will focus on the American voices found in Native American literature. In this unit we will study works from Native American authors that lend to our overarching concepts of multiculturalism and identity formation. My intention with this unit is to explore voices from a highly marginalized population: Native Americans. Students from all cultural backgrounds will relate to, connect with, and benefit from studying works of Native American authors. Alternatively, excluding or limiting multicultural authors would limit a student's knowledge: "when one side of an issue is presented—usually the dominant culture's—objectivity is definitely lacking" (White-Kaultaity, 2006, 14.) This unit explores voice and identity extensively through the literature studied. The authors present strong voices and identities overcoming adversity and poverty. As adolescents with their own inner- and outer-battles, the literature will serve as a model and source of discussion in which students can explore their own voices and identities. Reading authors from diverse and multicultural backgrounds will offer a chance of expression and identity-formation to students who would not feel confident or valued when taught the typical American canon of white male authors. In a course of Native American literature "authors report that Momaday's book [, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*,] elicited many responses from minority group students who otherwise were silent...[the minority students] felt that school could be a place that valued them" (White-Kaultaity, 14-15.) As educators, student engagement is our initial goal. If students don't engage with the texts, if they don't discuss them, if they don't reflect upon them, then we have nothing to work with. If students are engaged and feel valued, then school can truly become a learning environment.

The unit's texts will explore themes that every student will be able to relate to. White-Kaultaity states that Native American literature "fit[s] with universal themes studied in

classrooms: poems of love and loss, stories about basketball, essays about family” showing that students, will be able to connect to the works and use them to explore these themes in their own lives (2006, 15.) We will explore universal themes of the human condition and themes essential to the adolescent experience that all students will be able to reflect upon and discuss. The beauty of studying authors from differing cultural backgrounds is that students realize universal emotions, lessons, and themes that transcend race. It will allow students to hear from and reflect upon a different voice, but it will also encourage students to make connections with other cultural groups. If students can learn to identify with authors (characters, people, etc.) who are culturally different from them, if the students can construct the cultural bridge, then they can extend these skills of multicultural awareness and understanding to their daily lives. They will go out into the world and develop successful relationships in the global, interdependent, multicultural community.

Whenever teaching any sort of multicultural unit, teachers run the risk of ironically perpetuating stereotypes and further marginalizing groups of people. Marginalization happens when an educator mystifies Native American groups; teachers risk perpetuation stereotypes when they focus on strengths and weaknesses of a whole group of people. In teaching this unit, the educator must accept the responsibility to be informed, be accurate, and avoid stereotypes and marginalization. The educator should not group over 500 distinct Native American tribes into one generalization. The responsible educator will teach and celebrate the differences among tribes as they will celebrate the difference among individuals. In teaching each text, it is important to discuss the author’s specific origins and from which specific traditions he/she is writing, as well as, the author’s current environment. The essence of this unit is to promote connections between Native American texts and our students, but the responsible educator will

not compromise individuality in his/her aims to promote interconnectivity. As Gordy, the hyper-intellectual and perceptive high school student in Sherman Alexie's *An Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, states, "life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community" (2007, 132.) While we want to promote engagement through connection of Native American texts to our student's lives, anything that might 'other' or stereotype an entire group of people would be irresponsible on the part of the educator and detrimental to the overarching concept.

That being said, the texts in this unit have been selected for their authenticity, literary value, and relevance. Because this is a unit on Native American literature, the primary texts will be from authentic Native American writers. As expressed in the ALAN review on the reflection of teaching Native American authors, "native writers will represent a much richer and more accurate story than any other writer could, and they are less likely to use stereotypes" (White-Kaulaity, 2006, 13.) However, in support of our overarching concept, supporting texts will be from multicultural composers. A combination of reliable Native American writers and writers from differing cultural backgrounds will both provide an authentic basis of Native American literature that the students can rely upon, and it will allow for connections to be made to other cultural perspectives.

A potential problem in bringing this unit's texts into the high school environment is the level of language and severity of themes presented, specifically in our unit's novel *An Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* written by the celebrated American author, Sherman Alexie. Alexie's novel has received a lot of recognition and respect from literary societies, educators, pleasure readers, and students. There is a long list of accolades and awards celebrating this story of a lonely and awkward young boy growing up on a reservation. The novel was published in

2007 and is a National Book Award Winner. The protagonist, Arnold Spirit, comes from a very poor Spokane Indian community, his father is one alcoholic among many, his school has very few resources and out-dated educational material, and he is bullied by almost everyone on the reservation. Arnold decides to leave his reservation without community support to attend a nearby white school, a perceived-racist school, in search of hope and dreams. The novel is a coming-of-age story of Arnold Spirit's triumph against the odds, self-expression through art, formation of identity, and struggle with acceptance, popularity, death, loss, alcoholism, friendship, racism, poverty, love, sexuality, social constructs, and basketball. Some may feel that these themes are inappropriate in the classroom, themes like masturbation. The author of the novel justifies his incorporation of masturbation and metaphorical boners for literature and foul language when challenged:

Alexie said his book is indicative of reality.

“Everything in the book is what every kid in that school is dealing with on a daily basis, whether it's masturbation or racism or sexism or the complications of being human,” he said. “To pretend that kids aren't dealing with this on an hour-by-hour basis is a form of denial.”

“The world is an incredibly complicated place, and our literature must match that, especially literature for our kids,” Alexie said. “The book is incredibly positive about the world we live in, and people from vastly different politics and groups end up being friends. ... If they read the book, it's a celebration of the values of what they (parents who oppose the book) hold dear.” (Dake, 2008)

When we ignore the fact that masturbation and bullying and racism affect students, we are not helping them to develop ways to face these real-life issues. I argue that in addressing them face-

on in a positive way, educators can discuss the issues and encourage students to evolve their own identities and perspectives. Students, educators, parents, and writers should all openly communicate to discuss problematic things in order to develop a positive and beneficial stance. Students will be less vulnerable, confused, and troubled when faced with these dilemmas in real-life after they are able to reflect on them through literature and discussion.

The texts explored in this unit will represent the many genres in which writers compose their work. We will discuss poems, short stories, essays, non-fiction writing, and a novel. We will also discuss images, websites, emails, interviews, videos, and music. These texts will be both in-print and media-based. As our unit's literature should reflect the larger society of the United States, our activities should reflect the reading and writing that happens in the larger society. As for student output, they will be expected to compose not only in the typical print form well-known in the English classroom, but will also be expected to write, collaborate, and produce in digital/on-line formats. In a 2013 article of *Education Week*, Laura Mellet quotes a teacher's view of technology in the classroom:

We need to think of education as an individualized and year-round activity, not just something that takes place in bulk form within schools between 8:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Fridays when schools are in session," he writes. "Content should be ubiquitous and customized so that students can follow their learning passions and figure out where to get answers to basic questions. ... One of the greatest virtues of mobile technology is the way it enables social collaboration.

A central goal of our unit is to improve literacy and to improve digital literacy in both conventional and unconventional genres. Reading relates not only to reading words and print, but to the idea of processing and reflecting on a text. Writing relates not only to writing words,

but composing texts that convey meaning. Today most writing is happening via new literacies. We are writing blogs, tweets, articles, taking pictures, digital art, drawing comics, making movies, conducting interviews. By presenting students with reading and writing activities in a multitude of genres, educators will simultaneously teach students how to read and compose in a multitude of genres. As educators it is our responsibility to prepare students to develop literacy for their life, not just for the school environment. For students to be successful in the technological society we all live in, they must develop and be confident in their digital literacy.

Developing a unique and strong identity is central to the American voice. Immigrants formed our country because they wanted the freedom to create their own identity. In the United States, we pride ourselves as a land of opportunity; we, Americans, deem ourselves a country that does not discriminate based on class, religion, race, gender, and maybe even one day, sexual preference. However, the literature taught in schools does not reflect this ideal central to our constitution and central to the collective idea of what it means to be American. It is widely recognized that literature mirrors the life and society in which we live. If we accept this idea, then why do continue to not teach the literature representative of many American voices? Through this unit of Native American literature we can explore one of those unheard voices giving our students a more comprehensive and valuable view of American literature.

Reference List

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Goals & Rubrics

Overarching Goals:

Our class will:

- ✿ Explore a more comprehensive and multi-cultural view of American Literature through this unit on Native American Literature.
- ✿ Establish small group relationships, called communities, in which students can rely on each other for guidance, inquiry, and discussion of the various themes, issues, and texts we will explore during this unit.
- ✿ Strengthen their own identity and voice, cultivating an idea of who they are in the broader scheme of the American stew, through a reflection of the texts and narrative writing.
- ✿ Collaborate in the construction of a class wiki. The wiki will serve as a forum for students to collaborate with each other outside of class, and to discuss the works we are studying in class. Students will post their polished narrative writing assignments to the wiki. Also, we will become active in the on-line community by connecting to students, writers, and readers across the globe. Students are also encouraged to post interesting outside readings and writing assignments to share with our class. The wiki and on-line assignments will develop students' tools and knowledge to participate in an on-line environment. We will also learn values of digital citizenship and responsibility while communicating in the virtual writing community. This virtual writing community will encourage student writing and participation, and it will advocate a connected perspective of the American landscape.
- ✿ Develop skills and tools to approach multiple genres of literature (novel, poetry, short-story, essay, song, etc.).

We will meet these goals together through a variety of in-class activities, virtual activities, writing assignments, and projects.

Unit Grade

The grade for the unit will be out of 100 points, and the final grade will be on the A-F scale.

90-100/100=A, 80-89/100=B, 70-79/100=C, 60-69=D, and 0-59=F.

The grade will be weighted as follows:

Participation 20%

Character Study 30%

Narrative Writing Prompts/Class Wiki 20%

Multi-genre Project 30%

There will be opportunities for extra-credit throughout the unit. If a student has problems or issues meeting the requirements of this course, please see me and we can establish a plan for success in this unit.

GOAL # 1: Participation: 20 points

In this class we are emphasizing the importance of all the composing parts in the stew that is the United States. To mirror this belief, we must show in the classroom that every student's participation is integral to the success of our class.

RUBRIC # 1

A student will receive full credit (20 points) if he or she meets the following criteria:

- 👉 Participates and engages in class discussions, activities, and in-class writing assignments
- 👉 Listens and responds to other students
- 👉 Shows effort and thought during discussions, activities, and in-class writing assignment

A student will receive half-credit (10 points) if he or she meets the following criteria:

- 👉 Sometimes participates and engages in class discussions, various activities, and in-class writing assignments
- 👉 Listens and responds to other students
- 👉 Shows partial effort during discussions, activities, and in-class writing assignments

A student will receive no credit if he or she meets the following criteria:

- 👉 Never participates and/or detracts from the shared experience of class discussions, various activities, and in-class writing assignments
- 👉 Do not listen to other students or respond to their questions
- 👉 Shows no effort during discussions, activities, and in-class writing assignments

GOAL # 2: Character Study: 30 points

 Part A: Research & Presentation (15 points)

We begin our unit studying some of the myths from the Native American literary tradition, and then we move into more contemporary works. A central feature of most of the texts we are reading is that they are character-driven. This means that the characters and their identities shape the text and its central message. Each character has a set of attributes, roles, strengths, and flaws. If a character's attributes tie to a preexisting universal character, they are called an archetype. Some examples of these archetypes are tricksters, transformers, gods, nature spirits, wise women, animals, alcoholics, teachers, white Native American lovers, poor Native Americans, popular kids, nerds, etc. For this assignment, in your learning community choose a character that you would like to study in-depth. Next, research the character's attributes, roles, strengths, flaws, and their role in the text. This research should not only include what you have learned from the text (primary source), but also other interpretations of this character/archetype (secondary source.) Additionally, compose a works cited page showing the primary and secondary sources you used for the presentation.

RUBRIC # 2 Part A:

Category	Exemplary (5)	On the Right Path (3)	Lost in the Woods (0)	Total: _____/15
Archetype/ Character	Student researched an important character/ archetype in our texts	Student researched an archetype not in our texts	Student did not research an archetype/ character.	_____/5
Research	Research demonstrates in-depth knowledge of characteristics, attributes, roles, strengths, and flaws.	Research demonstrates adequate or incomplete knowledge of characteristics, attributes, roles, strengths, and flaws.	Research demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the archetype.	_____/5
Primary Sources	Student gives examples from the work to support his or her interpretations.	Student gives examples that may be inaccurate or misguided.	Student does not provide examples from our texts.	_____/5
Secondary Sources	Student uses 2 sources (at least one must be scholarly).	Student uses 1 source.	Student does not use outside sources during research.	_____/5
Works Cited	Student accurately cites both primary and secondary sources.	Student inaccurately cites both primary and secondary sources.	Student does not turn in a Works Cited page.	_____/5

 Part B: Body Biography (15 points)

The second part of this assignment will be to create a body biography of the character that your group researched. This will require your group to think about what you have learned about the character, and how to represent the essence of your character in a visual and written illustration. This assignment requires reflection on the text, the character, and the research done in Part A of the character study. It also requires discussion, collaboration, and creativity!

For the assignment, every group will receive the materials to create their body biography (butcher paper, markers.) An excellent body biography will capture the essence of the character, show how he or she or it is central to the text, and teach the class something new that will develop a new perspective of the work! Remember to include visual symbols and important quotes from your primary and secondary sources. Brownie points to all those that represent their character's attributes using creative interpretations (symbolic possibilities of color and pattern, student-generated poetry and prose, or something entirely original.)

RUBRIC # 2 Part B:

	Meets	Almost There!	Does Not Meet	Total: _____/15
Symbols	(5)The body biography includes symbols that successfully interpret features of the character.	(3)The body biography includes symbols that do not successfully interpret features of the character.	(1)The body biography does not include symbols, or it has illustrations that are not symbols.	_____/5
Quotes	(2)The group includes important quotes from their primary and secondary sources.	(1)The group includes quotes from the primary source, but not a secondary source.	(0)The group did not use any quotes in their body biography	_____/2
Illustration	(3)The body biography shows effort, collaboration, thought, originality, and creativity.	(2)The body biography shows some thought and collaboration.	(1)The body biography shows the group spent very little effort. This poor character will now not have a developed identity!	_____/3
Presentation	(5)Presentation reveals student's preparation. Presenters speak clearly and hold audience's attention. Presentation shares the knowledge the group has learned.	(2-4)Presentation reveals some preparation (or fantastic improvisation!) Students speak mostly clearly. Presentation shares partial knowledge about the character.	(1)Presentation lacks fluidity, cohesion, information or is non-existent.	_____/5

GOAL # 3: Narrative Writing Responses/ Class Wiki: 20 points

During our unit we will have two to three narrative writing prompts each week. Students are allowed to opt out of three entries, but they must post on the wiki on that date that they opt out. On the day of the prompt we will spend the first ten minutes of class in the media center allowing students access to the computer and internet. In the case of a student's absence, they will have the choice of using this entry as one of their opt-outs or writing the entry from home, public library, etc. The narrative writing prompts will be a place for students to explore the themes and literature we are discussing in class in a medium that will not be scrutinized based on grammar or form. These prompts will provide students an opportunity to reflect and apply their own thoughts and experiences to the texts we are reading. However, don't expect these prompts to be like the usual sterilized inquiries—our prompts will be challenging, thought-provoking, and sometimes not even writing. Prompts will ask students to reflect on questions, quotes, excerpts, images, videos, and music. Responses will be graded on completion and reflection.

The class wiki will allow for constant dialogue and connections. Via our wiki we will discuss and share our work with each other and people around the world. These people will be other students, teachers, readers, and writers from around the globe that will offer new and different perspectives. There will be sections in which you can post products you are working on, or things you found interesting (that pertain to our course!) We will use the wiki as an outlet to explore literature, our writing, and expand our perspectives of multiculturalism and what American Literature means. While only the prompts from the wiki will be graded, everyone in our class will work together to compose, edit, and enrich our site.

RUBRIC # 3:

A student will receive full credit (20 points) if he or she meets the following requirements:

- 📌 Compose at least 100 words for all prompts, unless otherwise specified
- 📌 Respond to the prompt/theme/question/topic
- 📌 Show reflection, thoughtfulness, and creativity

A student will receive half-credit (10 points) if he or she meets the following requirements:

- 📌 Respond to most prompts, or respond to prompts with less than 100 words
- 📌 Respond to the prompt/theme/question/topic
- 📌 Show slight reflection, thoughtfulness, and creativity

A student will receive a small amount of credit (5 points) if he or she meets the following requirements:

- 📌 Respond to at least half of the prompts, or respond to prompts with a few lines
- 📌 Mostly responds to the prompt/theme/question/topic
- 📌 Barely reflects on prompt

A student will receive no credit if he or she does not respond to the prompts.

GOAL # 4: Multi-Genre Project 30 points:

As the culminating product of our course, students will work in their communities on a multi-genre project. We will allow an entire week of in-class preparation for the project. If more time is needed, the community will have to orchestrate a way to complete the project after school. In your community, decide on a text that we have studied in this unit. After deciding on a text, explore the meanings and themes and how they apply to a multi-cultural perspective; connect themes and issues you see in this work with what we have discussed in class. Next, decide as a group on a multi-genre project that you feel embodies this work and the themes of cultural awareness.

Multi-Genre Prompt

Over this unit we have read works by multiple Native American authors who are marginalized, or usually excluded from the typical canon of American Literature. We have explored themes and issues involving identity, acceptance, difference, language, cultural conflict, dissent, etc. Now it is time for you to choose a poem, short story, essay, novel, or other text we studied that interests you.

Take this text, and within your community group, explore the themes, issues, and central ideas presented in the work. How does the text connect to our overarching concept of multiculturalism? I would like you to represent the chosen text in another genre or form. You have the artistic license! Possible options could be a sculpture, short movie, collage, fairy tale, game, journal, comic strip, map, Article, soap opera, dance, song, drawing, love note—the possibilities are endless. Follow the rubric to guide you during this project; remember to work/discuss/grow within your community, and as always, I am at your disposal for bouncing of ideas and guidance.

Multi-genre Project Rubric: _____/30

CATEGORY	5/4	3	2	1
Content	Covers connections between chosen work and our overarching concept in-depth with details and examples. Knowledge of chosen work is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the overarching concept and connects these to the chosen work. Knowledge of chosen work appears to be good.	Includes essential information about text and overarching concept, but the connections are loose or shallowly-based.	Content is minimal or there are no connections made between chosen work and overarching concept.
Product	Final product demonstrates the student has represented chosen work in a thoughtful, creative, and reflective way. Final product represents both the chosen work and the central themes of our unit.	Final product demonstrates some thoughtfulness, creativity, and reflection. Final product represents the chosen work and makes some connections to the overarching concept.	Final product shows minimal thoughtfulness, creativity, or reflection. Final product loosely represents chosen work and overarching concept.	Final product shows little to no effort, thoughtfulness, creativity, or reflection. Final product fails to connect to chosen work or overarching concept.
Presentation	Well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that holds audience attention.	Rehearsed with fairly smooth delivery that holds audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth, but able to maintain interest of the audience most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention often lost.
Written Justifications	The written justifications are at least 1 page in length. They describe in-depth how the product connects to the chosen work and themes. They are clear, well-composed, and use examples from the	The written justifications are at least 1 page in length. They describe how the product connects to the chosen work and themes. They are generally clear and use at least one example	The written justifications are less than a page in length. They present un-developed connections between the product and the works. They provide ambiguous or	The written justifications are 0-1 pages in length. They fail to describe how the product connects to the chosen work. They don't present examples from the text.

	works to justify their product.	from the works to justify their product.	unclear examples.	
Requirements	Students turn in on-time a product and a written justification. Chosen work represents a multicultural American perspective.	Students turn in a product and a written justification late. Chosen work represents a multicultural American perspective.	Students turn in a product or a written justification. Chosen work represents a multicultural perspective (but not an American one).	Students do not turn in anything. The chosen work is not representative of a multicultural perspective. Remember: Please ask me before-hand about your chosen work if you are unsure if it is appropriate!
Collaboration	This category will be evaluated on an individual basis. Each student within the community puts in effort and thought into the final product, written justifications, and discussion of chosen work. Student is respectful of their group members and collaborates well with their community.	Student puts some effort into parts of the final product, written justifications, and/or discussion of chosen work. Student attempts to be respectful of their group members and tries to collaborate with their community.	Student barely participates, doing the bare minimum to complete final product and/or written justifications. Student disrespects their group members and does not work well with others.	Student refuses to participate in completion of final product or written justifications. Student disrespects group members.

References

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Lesson Plans

This unit is based on 50 minute class periods. Lessons run with the assumption that a class has a 1:1 device to student ratio, and that the class is familiar with the twitter, website, and internet platforms used in the course. Modifications will be made for each class depending on resources and specific circumstances.

Day # 1: Initial Observations and the Briefest of Histories

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: Slide show of stock Native American photos. Students will tweet their initial thoughts, observations, questions, and responses to the slide show @NativeAmericanLiterature #InitialObservations.

5 minutes: I will overview briefly what we tweeted for the class and make suggestions/comments.

15 minutes: In groups students will choose what they felt to be the most prevalent and important tweets, and they will compose a found poem that will be shared with the class.

10 minutes: Groups will share poems allowing for a question and answer after each group. These poems will be put into an on-line folder to be returned to at the end of the unit.

8 minutes: We will all receive three maps and a timeline. The first map will be of the pre-Columbian Native American territories. The second map will be Native territories in 1870. The final map will be of Native American reservations today. The timeline will be of major events pertaining to Native Americans in the United States from 1492 to present time. In small groups students discuss why the Native American's land and population size decreased so drastically over the years. Students will question their own perceptions of history, the Age of Exploration, Thanksgiving, and Manifest Destiny.

HW: Read *Morning Girl* by Michael Dorris.

Day # 2: What is history? Are alternative histories possible?

2 minutes: Attendance

8 minutes: On the board have Winston Churchill's quote written: "history is written by the victors." As a class, read Sherman Alexie's poem "On the Amtrak to Boston."

10 minutes: In groups, students will discuss the poem and *Morning Girl*. How does our perceptions of the discovery of America and the Age of Exploration change when we look from a Native American perspective? What does history really mean, and do we accept history as subjective or objective? What implications does this have? I suggest students make a Venn Diagram to compare what they learn from their history textbook and the 'alternative' versions of the colonization of America.

15 minutes: Every group will engage in a webquest on a historical event in Native American history. While each group will be expected to research a different event, choices will be what really happened with Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears, the War of 1812, John Wayne and the 'Indians,' the Indian Removal Act, the Battle of Little Big Horn, the Homestead Act, and Native Americans gaining U.S. citizenship. Groups will research on the internet to compile information on their chosen topic.

10 minutes: Each group will demonstrate the information about their chosen topic in a composition of a newspaper article, poster, advertisement, or pamphlet.

10 minutes: Groups will share their work with the class.

HW: Find an article concerning Native American culture, history, news, art, or issues.

Day # 3: Racial Constructs and Stereotypes

2 minutes: Attendance

3-5 minutes: In groups, quickly share the article found and then students will put the article in their folder. These might be great opportunities to discover resources for the multi-genre project at the end of the unit. It also encourages students to engage in current Native American issues.

5 minutes: Have the class collaborate on definitions of race, racism, prejudice and stereotype.

Why do these exist?

2 minutes: Introduce the concept of race as a social construct. Present a variety of perspectives on the definition of race. This will allow students to develop their own ideas about race.

10 minutes: In groups, discuss stereotypes we know about Native Americans and whether we find them to be offensive or harmless. Next, work through Tim Giago's article entitled "National Media Should Stop Using Obscene Words" arguing against the use of derogatory names for sports teams.

15 minutes: The class will now have a debate whether they think professional sports teams should change their names, symbols, chants, and mascots that are considered derogatory, or whether they should be allowed to keep these traditions. The class will gather in three spots of the room depending on their ideas. The spots will be 'for the abolition of derogatory names and mascots,' 'against the abolition,' and 'indifferent/apathetic.' We will go from one group to the other and allow one person to speak at a time in a rotation of the three groups. Students are allowed to change groups throughout the debate.

10 minutes: *Online Journal Response # 1: Many people claim that the United States is a 'melting pot' where many different cultures come together and blend into one cohesive whole. I don't buy it! I think the United State is a more of a stew with distinct parts. We share the same broth (American identities), but each vegetable has distinct differences and flavors (cultural*

identities.) Compose a response where you are allowed to agree or disagree with me. You can also provide an even better metaphor if you defend why it is better.

As a class we are about to approach works from Native American writers. While we study these authors it is important to avoid stereotypes and racism. That being said, we still want to honor the differences between Native American culture and mainstream 'white-american' culture.

Day # 4: Native American Myths and the Oral Tradition

2 minutes: Attendance

5 minutes: Introduce the rhetorical strategies used to manipulate racial perceptions in literature developed by Toni Morrison in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (economy of stereotype, metonymic displacement, metaphysical condensation, fetishization, dehistoricizing allegory). While almost all the primary authors we study are authentic Native authors, it is important to give students tools to recognize language and rhetorical devices that perpetuate racial stereotypes and prejudice.

20 minutes: Define myth as a class. Playing the jigsaw game, the group of five will break up and go into a new group of five. Each of these new groups will read and interpret a Native American myth together. Discuss themes, symbols, lessons, and how this work embodies a myth. Make sure to identify from which specific Native American group this myth comes. Develop ideas of how to present this myth to your home group.

20 minutes: Back in the original groups, each member will re-tell the myth they studied using interpretative style and practicing in the oral tradition. Emphasize what is important and make the myth interesting and a learning opportunity for your fellow peers!

10 minutes: Discuss the different types of myths, symbols, and archetypes. Ask students to pull examples from the myths they just studied to encourage the discussion.

Day # 5: Writing Workshop/Literary Circles

2 minutes: Attendance

30 minutes: Writing Workshop: George Hillock's Shell Game focusing on developing specific language

20 minutes: Literature circles: Students will be put into literature circle groups different than their everyday collaborative group. The group will assign roles and decide on a short story to read together.

Roles: discussion director, passage master, connector, illustrator

Choices: "Tosamah's Story" N. Scott Momaday

"The Man to Send Rain Clouds" Leslie Marmon Silko

"A Geronimo Story" Leslie Marmon Silko

"Luminous Thighs" Gerald Vizenor

"Crossing" Simon Ortiz

"Men on the Moon" Simon Ortiz

"Love Medicine" Louise Erdrich

"Rayona's Seduction" Michael Dorris

Day # 6: Songs

2 minutes: Attendance

5 minutes: Mini-lesson about the role of songs in Native American tradition. Songs are used for specific purposes and have powerful effects. What other traditions use songs that we are familiar? Discuss the importance of repetition and conciseness of image. Show students the categories of songs that we will use.

10 minutes: Read through the traditional songs as a group. Look for connections with songs you may know already from your own traditions, religions, mainstream music, etc. Are there any songs that are starkly different?

20 minutes: Discuss the images and repetition and try and decide which category the song belongs. The group with the most songs placed in the correct group will be able to choose any appropriate song for the class to listen to and decide what purposes this song has.

5 minutes: Winning group's song played on youtube and discussion of its elements and what greater purpose the song may have for its listeners.

8 minutes: Explore Native American mysticism and a non-western perspective of nature through a reading/exposure to Joy Harjo's poem "Fire."

HW: Begin "The Marriage of White Man's Dog"

Day # 7: Contemporary Songs/ Poetry

2 minutes: Attendance

15 minutes: In groups of three read aloud "I Give You Back" by Joy Harjo. Read it aloud again. This will lead into a student-response driven reflection on the poem. What power does this song/poem have?

3 minutes: Watch the video of Joy Harjo reading this poem in a Def Jam setting:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAYCf2Gdycc>

15 minutes: Individual writing about a fear that we have that we would like to release. This could be a poem or a narrative or a description—whatever form of writing fits best.

10 minutes: Quaker sharing of writing. This means everyone sits in a circle and a person may share however much of their writing they like at any point. Students can share only a line, or the whole thing, and they can share when they are ready.

5 minutes: Discussion in collaborative groups on the process and whether they felt the poem had power in releasing their fear, and discuss if we believe that songs in general have effects on the listeners.

Day # 8-9: James Welch's "The Marriage of White Man's Dog" from *Fools Crow*

2 minutes: Attendance

On these two days each group will work on creating a blog from White Man's Dog's perspective. Students will have access to a computer or tablet to do this mini-project.

The blog posts must all be appropriate for school, but can consist of text, image, and sound.

A fantastic blog would convey the experiences had by White Man's Dog in this excerpt. You can include things directly from the text or you may make your own inferences that extend beyond the text. This selection describes a turning point in White Man's Dog's coming-of-age and this should be represented in the blog. There are also elements of magic and cultural encounters between whites and Native Americans that should also be represented in the blog.

Links to the blogs will be posted on our class wiki for other classmates/ the world to see.

Online Journal Response # 2: Each student may choose a blog entry that they wrote or mostly wrote to post as their journal response.

Day # 10: Writing Workshop/ Literature Circles

2 minutes: Attendance

30 minutes: Poetry. Give all students two sheets of paper. In five minutes, have them write down as many words as they can that start with the first letter of their name. Next, have each student circle three of those words that they like best.

Now tell them to write their name vertically down the left-hand side of a blank sheet. Pick a word from the three circled to begin your poem. The idea is to have each line begin with the

corresponding letter of your first name. Remind students to relax and see what flows from their inner-poet.

15 minutes: Meet in literature circles and continue to discuss/read the work picked from last week.

HW: Readings from Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*(*True Diary*) pp. 1-13

Day # 11: We Meet our Protagonist

2 minutes: Attendance

30 minutes: Individually, use the four-square activity to explain what we know about Arnold Spirit.

Fold the paper into fours and draw a picture of Arnold Spirit in the top left corner.

In the top right corner describe what you know about Arnold and his environment to a friend.

In the bottom left corner describe the same thing but to a teacher.

In the bottom right write a prediction of what will happen in the novel. What do you think his battles will be against?

10 minutes: Share in small groups what you have in each square.

8 minutes: Groups will bring up in whole-class discussion major points and what they agreed upon and disagreed upon. Discuss different predictions and guess which ones we think will be the most accurate.

HW: Readings from *True Diary* pp. 14-31

Day # 12: Life on the Rez

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: In groups, discuss reservation life as experienced by Arnold Spirit. What would a day in Arnold's life look like? What problems does Arnold face that you do not? What things are similar?

10 minutes: Individually, imagine that Arnold Spirit had sent these first few chapters as a letter. Write a response to Arnold in an email and send it the teacher.

25 minutes: Arnold has trouble fitting-in with the other kids on the reservation and is often bullied. Bullying and cyber-bullying happens to all of us at one point or another. In groups, work on an anti-bullying and anti-cyber bullying campaign. Design flyers to put around the school and to display on our class website.

3 minutes: Introduce multi-genre project to class.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 32-47

Day # 13: Hope

2 minutes: Attendance

15 minutes: In small groups decide whether Arnold Spirit a hero? What are our feelings about him at this point considering he just hurt threw a book at his teacher's face and made his grandma cry? What about Mr. P, Arnold's parents, and Rowdy. Decide whether each character is a hero, a villain, or something else.

15 minutes: Have the four characters drawn on the board. In a round robin manner, a representative from each group will come to the board and add a text or image to the character drawing from the small group discussion. Focus on the characters strengths and flaws.

17 minutes: *Online Journal # 3: Why do you think Arnold can only find hope if he leaves the reservation? Write what you predict will happen to Arnold when he goes to the white school.*

How do you think this will affect his life on the reservation? Write about the future you imagine Arnold will have after this point.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 48-67

Day # 14: Transition

2 minutes: Attendance

3 minutes: Divide class into three groups for issues carousel and explain how the issues will rotate, but they will not. A large class may need sub-divisions among groups.

10 minutes: Issue # 1: Did Arnold make a good choice in leaving the reservation? What did he lose and gain in this decision? Would you have made the same choice in his position?

10 minutes: Issue # 2: Look at the cartoon on page 57. Arnold feels like he is in-between the white world and the Indian world. What does this mean? How does this alter his identity? Is there positive or negative potential in this cultural conflict/exchange?

10 minutes: Issue # 3: Was Arnold right to punch Roger?

5 minutes: Each group will share with the class key points that arose in their discussions.

10 minutes: In collaborative groups, brainstorm ideas for the multi-genre project.

Day # 15: Writing Workshop/Literature Circles

2 minutes: Attendance

28 minutes: Murder Mystery News Reporter Game

All students will secretly pick an item from their person that is not valuable. The teacher will collect all items in a bag. Then the teacher will set up the scenario that there was a recent murder and everyone is a news reporter trying to get the scoop. Students will come back in small groups and have a few minutes to observe the items found on the victim's body. They will then go back

and catalog what they saw. Next each student will write up a news report inferring the age, gender and lifestyle of the victim and how they were murdered.

20 minutes: Literature Circles

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 69-76 and work on multi-genre project.

Day # 16: Cartoons

2 minutes: Attendance

8 minutes: In small groups, look through the cartoons used in *True Diary*. Why do you think Sherman Alexie wanted cartoons in his novel? Do you find them effective? What do they add to the text that words cannot?

10 minutes: Decide on a specific cartoon to study as a group and re-read the text enveloping the chosen cartoon. Discuss what the cartoon conveys and how that fits in the novel. How would the novel be different without that specific cartoon?

20 minutes: Meeting in our literature circles, focus on the short story you are discussing in your group and create a cartoon to embed within the text. The cartoon should give the story more depth and reflect the text's themes/messages. Groups can decide to draw this cartoon or create one with an online generator. An example of a generator is

<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/index.html>.

Post cartoons on our wiki. Pictures can be taken and uploaded of the hand-drawn cartoons.

10 minutes: Conference and brainstorm ideas in groups about which character to use for the body biography. This character can be any of the ones that we have read together in class.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 77-98

Day # 17: Body Biography

2 minutes: Attendance

Refer to goal # 2.

This is a group project for a grade. Each group will be given the two-part assignment to research a specific character then create a body biography. This is an opportunity for the students to practice project management and time management. The teacher should float around and give suggestions, praise, and gentle nudges in the right direction. About half-way through the class I would make a small announcement to wrap up the research part and begin the body biography.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 99-113

Day # 18: High School Problems

2 minutes: Attendance

In the chapter “Hunger Pains,” Arnold discovers that Penelope has an eating disorder. Thus far we have come across Native American Issues, but we have also been confronted with problems that are very real in all high school settings.

10 minutes: In small groups, make double-entry logs with the issues facing characters of the book on the left and how they relate to your life on the right. Do you connect with some of these issues and not connect with others?

20 minutes: As a whole class, we are going to have a talk show about real student issues we are facing. These could be bullying, popularity, love-life, insecurities, eating disorders, money, and oppressive authority figures. Two students will sit on the panel as permanent anchors and other students will volunteer as guests who are knowledgeable about certain issues.

5 minutes: Debrief on the talk show format and review some of the key points of the discussions. Discuss ways to deal with these issues that are serious to student’s lives.

13 minutes: *Online Journal Response # 4*: Arnold receives a letter from his sister in Montana. Re-read this letter, and respond to it as if you were Arnold. What would you say to your sister who ran away from home to find happiness?

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 114-132

Day # 19: Love, Fun, and a Small Gift

2 minutes: Attendance

5 minutes: Have students look at Arnold's relationships with Rowdy, with Penelope, with Gordy, and with Roger. Each friendship is a bit different and covers a different aspect of Arnold's life.

How would you describe these dynamics to a friend? Do you have similar relationships in your life?

15 minutes: Individually, write a diary entry about Arnold from Rowdy's, Penelope's, Gordy's, or Roger's perspective. Focus on the chapters we read the night before ("Rowdy Gives Me Advice About Love," "Dance Dance Dance," and "Don't Trust Your Computer.")

10 minutes: Partner with someone you don't normally exchange writing with. Read your pieces aloud to each other. Everyone should say three things they liked about or learned from the writing and one thing that confused them.

10 minutes: Read aloud Gary Soto's "Oranges." This poem is not from a Native American perspective, but ties into our text in a beautiful way. Have students draw connections between the gift the boy receives in the poem and the exchange between Roger and Arnold.

8 minutes: In collaborative groups finalize ideas for the multi-genre project and make a list of pieces that you would like to include. This may be a great opportunity to develop the skeleton for written justifications.

HW: Bring in a piece to work on for your multi-genre project.'

Day # 20: Writing Workshop/Literature Circles

2 minutes: Attendance

Pull up on the screen a list of genre examples.

10 minutes: Take the day of the month you were born and use that number to count the genre you will write in. If you are born on the 10th, you will pick the 10th genre on the list. Next thinking of your topic, write for your multi-genre piece in the selected genre.

5 minutes: Share work with group or class.

10 minutes: Have members of the group choose which genre they want their friends to write in. Compose a piece in that selected genre.

5 minutes: Share work with group or class.

18 minutes: Literature Circles & Casual conferencing with the teacher about the multi-genre project, pieces, and written justifications.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 133-149

Day # 21: The First Basketball Game

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: Introduce the photo journal/blog. The photo journal will be online and posted on our class wiki. It will reflect on the text and the writer's experience. The photo journal will be mixed-media display using both images, quotes, writing, and other mediums the writer feels fitting. Show examples of photo journals to the class.

8 minutes: Discuss how this week we will experience some very heavy issues with Arnold. Arnold will experience defeat, victory, basketball, loss, tolerance, violence, death, friendship, alcoholism, depression, and cultural conflict. Over the course of this week, pick one of these themes to focus on and create a photo journal marking Arnold's experience of the events and your experience as a reader. Please bring your own experiences into the photo journal as well.

10 minutes: In groups, brainstorm ideas for the photo journal. All students should set up their blog page for the photo journal and decide on a theme to follow.

15 minutes: Head outside, but still on the school's campus. A place rich in images will be ideal—both nature and human interactions occurring. In pairs, search for images that you can connect to your theme. Take pictures of things in your environment that you would like to include in your photo journal.

5 minutes: Post your picture and write your first blog entry.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 150-167

Day # 22: Loss and Laughing

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: Small group discussion on Arnold's grief. How does he define grief and how does he deal with it? Arnold's grief extends to the greater collective grief felt by all Native Americans. How does the text show this?

10 minutes: On grief: "Letter from the End of the Twentieth Century" by Joy Harjo
How does this poem relate to *True Diary*? How could a poem about an African speak to the Native American perspective?

5 minutes: In small groups, imagine you are a movie director and you want to make a movie about one of the scenes from yesterday's readings. Decide which scene you would like to film and decide how you would like for this to look. Think about how the setting would look, what the characters would be wearing, how would they be acting, what music would be playing in the background, what props would be in the scene?

20 minutes: Using our devices, be it an iPad, iPhone, or video recording device, act out and film this short scene in your group. Post the video on the class wiki.

3 minutes: Pick a quote to put on your photo journal blog, or write a quick post.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 168-196.

Day # 23: Heavy Troubles and Alcohol

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: Arnold Spirit loses three people very close to him because of alcohol. Alcoholism is a huge problem among Native American communities.

Read in small groups these poem pairings: “Evolution” by Sherman Alexie and “Whiskey” from *From Sand Creek* by Simon Ortiz (pp.48-49)

5 minutes: In small groups discuss reactions to the poems and how they connect and don’t connect to *True Diary*.

5 minutes: Watch video of Sherman Alexie discussing his own battle with alcoholism:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wK4dBeDvpys>

5 minutes: Reflection in small groups about alcoholism and what we have learned.

15 minutes: *Online Journal Response # 5: Arnold deals with serious problems and loss in the novel. He is overwhelmed with depression, not attending school, acting defiant, laughing hysterically, and being a punk when talking to the news reporter. Do you believe Arnold has gone crazy? What evidence do you see that he is crazy or sane? Write this journal entry reflecting on Arnold and his experience and whether you think he is crazy with grief or not.*

8 minutes: Work on the photo journals.

HW: Read *True Diary* pp. 197-230.

Day # 24: Turtles, Basketball, and Friendship

2 minutes: Attendance

10 minutes: Whole-class discussion about the tribe of immigrants, Turtle Lake, and the role of basketball in Arnold’s life.

5 minutes: Watch the video of Sherman Alexie on the Colbert Report:

<http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/189691/october-28-2008/sherman-alexie>

20 minutes: After having finished the novel, reflect on Arnold's coming-of-age. How did he change over the course of the novel? Much of his changes connect to his physical locations. He begins in the reservation, then goes back and forth between the reservation and Rearden, and ends with a mythical story on the reservation. In small groups, draw a map connecting Arnold Spirit's movement, life, and his coming-of-age.

5 minutes: Share the maps with the class.

8 minutes: Everyone will return to the found poem they wrote at the beginning of the unit. After spending five weeks studying Native American literature, do you still find this poem expresses your views on the unit? Take time to revise the poem to fit your new perspective, or write an entirely new piece.

Day # 25: Multi-Genre Work Day

2 minutes: Attendance

15 minutes: Individually work on finalizing written justifications for pieces. Teacher will float around to guide and work with students.

10 minutes: In pairs, explain your justifications and ideas for your project with each other. Focus on the cohesion of the project and the clarity of the justifications. If your friend does not have any idea what you mean, work together to define that.

15 minutes: Work on a piece for your multi-genre work.

8 minutes: In a different pairing, share pieces and give each other advice or point out areas that are unclear.

Day # 26: Multi-Genre Work Day

2 minutes: Attendance

15 minutes: Work on a new piece for your project.

10 minutes: Meet in a new pairing to discuss the pieces.

15 minutes: Work on a different piece for your project.

8 minutes: Meet in a new pairing to discuss the pieces.

Day # 27: Multi-Genre Work Day

2 minutes: Attendance

30 minutes: Finalize pieces of your multi-genre project and your written justifications.

15 minutes: In groups of three, explain your justifications and final pieces. This is a great opportunity to find areas that will need extra work/clarification.

3 minutes: Decide presentation order.

Day # 28, 29, 30: Presentations of Multi-Genre Projects