

Who Am I?:
A Unit of Self-Discovery Through
Literature

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Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle.

-Lewis Carroll

So here is what I'm suggesting: that teachers think about what they're doing, and about the personal and political implications of their subject matter; that they try to understand who they themselves are; and that they attempt to follow their own daimons in their own classrooms. Here's what else I'm suggesting: that no matter the subject matter ostensibly being taught, the real point is to help the students find themselves, and to find their own passion. Anything else is to lead them astray, to do them actual damage.

-Derrick Jensen

I think schools are a crucial--probably the most crucial--site for inviting us to view ourselves in a different mirror.

-Ronald Takaki

Rationale

High school is a time of self-doubt. Teenagers face issues such as peer pressure, physical and social awkwardness, parental expectations, and confusion about identity on a daily basis. The pressure of "fitting in" can feel insurmountable during adolescence. According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, 11-18 year olds are placed in a position where they are "sometimes morbidly, often curiously, preoccupied with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are, and with the question of how to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier with the ideal prototypes of the day" (128).

The main question asked during this stage is "Who Am I, and what is my goal in life?"

As a future high school teacher, I believe it is important to help scaffold students during this stage of self-discovery. While I do not think teachers should ever tell or even suggest to students who they should be or how they should live, I do firmly believe that it is our duty to introduce students to the ways that a variety of people live, in order to help our students explore options for themselves in their own lives. I subscribe to the idea that literature should be read as both a window and a mirror: As a window to see how other's live their lives, and as a mirror to see oneself in the literature. By exposing students to a variety of literature, I hope to help them better understand themselves and connect with society at large.

In this unit, we will read a variety of genres of literature about people from a various backgrounds who are in the process of self-discovery. As we read these different genres, the students will complete various personal writing exercises in each genre. Throughout the unit, we will focus on questions of identity, and how we define ourselves and others. The culminating project for this unit will be a multi-genre paper, which each student will create and share with the entire class. I chose the multi-genre format because it will allow students to be creative and assert their own identities into their papers. These papers can include music, poetry, analytical essays, artwork, etc. They can be electronic or paper-based. I believe that the more freedom and ownership we give students in school, the more they will enjoy, and ultimately learn, from their classes. I also believe that by allowing students to work within a variety of

genres, I am creating a more equitable classroom. Students who are more gifted at expressing themselves artistically, persuasively, analytically, etc. can do so. According to Chapman and King, “students perform best when they use their strongest intelligences” (29). By giving students freedom of choice, they will be able to use any combination of Gardner’s intelligences they are most comfortable and competent in. But because they all must write in a variety of genres, students will also be forced out of their comfort zones during this process.

Parents may disagree with some of the subject matter we will be discussing in class, such as substance abuse, suicide, discrimination, homosexuality, and mental illness. In reality, these are all issues that our teenagers are facing in this country every day. By not addressing these issues, we won’t make them go away. While I am not placing values on any lifestyle choices, I believe that through reading about teens who are going through some of these typically “off limits” issues my students can become more comfortable in their own skin and hopefully more understanding and compassionate toward peers who may be encountering some of these issues. My ultimate hope is that this unit will help students become more self-assured and open-minded individuals.

Instead of using the same canonized literature that is typically taught in American Literature, I have chosen to teach a variety of texts that are more pertinent to our modern-day society. I will make use of music, graphic novels, diaries, and novels in this unit.

I will begin the unit by playing the Cat Stevens song “On the Road to Find Out”. We will discuss the lyrics to the song and I will explain to the students our journey of self-discovery which we will undertake during this unit. The song begins with the singer leaving his home to find himself. He encounters many people and experiences along the way, but realizes that “the answer lies within” and he must ultimately look within himself to find who he is. Through listening to this song, I hope to emphasize that this unit aims to only show students how others live their lives, but that each student must ultimately decide on his/her own who he/she really is.

Our first novel will be Jacqueline Woodson’s From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun. This is the story of Melanin Sun, a fourteen year-old African American boy who lives with his single mother in a predominantly Puerto-Rican neighborhood in Brooklyn. Melanin has a hard time fitting in because he is quiet, introspective, and extremely dark-skinned. He is already facing the awkwardness and uncertainty of falling in love for the first time when his mother brings home her new lover, a white woman. Through the reading of this novel, we will discuss issues of racial identity and discrimination as well as sexual identity and discrimination.

Next we will read Go Ask Alice, the anonymous diary of a teenager who descends into the world of substance abuse and eventually dies of an overdose. As this book is written entirely as a series of diary entries, the format will help students begin to imagine options for their multi-genre paper.

Next, students will be given the choice to read either Sandra Cisneros's The House on Mango Street or J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye. The House on Mango Street tells the story of a young girl, Esperanza, who is struggling to identify herself as a racial minority in America. This coming-of-age novel will allow for discussion of issues facing women and minorities in our society. Because it is written as a series of vignettes, it will also serve as another possible writing style for the students' multigenre piece. The Catcher in the Rye tells the story of Holden Caulfield, a sixteen year old boy who is expelled from school because of poor grades. This is another coming-of-age novel, but it is written from a cynical, intelligent boy's point of view. This is the only reading option for this unit that is written in a traditional prose novel style; therefore it will serve as another possibility for the multigenre paper.

The final novel we will read for this unit is the graphic novel Ghost World. This is the story of two teenage girls, Enid and Rebecca, who are struggling with their self-identity. They constantly change their outward appearances in hopes of finding an identity for themselves, and they are both extremely judgmental of others based solely on outward appearance. Through reading this book and watching an excerpt from the movie adaptation we will continue our discussion of identity and self-discovery.

Throughout the unit students will keep a reading log of their personal responses to the literature. We will also complete a writing exercise with each piece in a genre other than that which it was written in. In other

words, the response to Go Ask Alice might be written as a comic strip or poem, but not as a journal entry. My hope is that this will give students creative freedom to respond to the readings in a more natural and personal way. At the end of the unit, each student will give a 5 minute presentation to the class of their multi-genre paper. They may either read some of their pieces or summarize their responses to the class. I believe that allowing students to have a larger sense of audience will help give them more pride and ownership to their writing. I also hope that by sharing some of their responses with the class we will again help each student see how they define both themselves and others.

References

Chapman, C. & King, R. (2005). *Differentiated assessment strategies: One tool doesn't fit all*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin.

Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: HarperCollins.

Materials

- From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun by Jacqueline Woodson
- Go Ask Alice
- The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
- The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
- Ghost World by Daniel Clowes
- Film adaptation of Ghost World

Goals

1. Students will keep a reader's journal, which must be turned in weekly. The journal should include personal responses to the literature we are reading in class. Students are encouraged to be creative and personal in their journal writing; therefore grammar and mechanics will not be graded. If I notice any blatant and/or recurring problems with grammar or mechanics, I will address these as they occur. The idea behind the reader's journal is for students to feel safe and comfortable with writing about their own personal connections and feelings about the readings. Students will use these journals to articulate their responses to the readings, and later to reflect back on their reactions when composing their multi-genre project. Each week, students must write at least three responses to their readings. The lengths of these responses may vary. There are no minimum page requirements, but I do reserve the right to speak with any student who I feel is not writing an authentic journal.

Assessment for Reader's journals:

Journals will part of the weekly participation grade. Individual grades will not be given for the journals; Instead they will be considered either complete, partially complete or incomplete.

- Complete journals will be turned in on-time with three entries per week
- Partially complete journals will be turned in late with three entries.
- Incomplete journals will contain less than three entries for the week's readings.

2. Students will compose a multigenre paper as their culminating project for the unit. The multigenre piece may be electronic, paper-based, or a combination of the two. Throughout the unit, we will conduct in-class writing exercises in which students will respond to our readings in a genre other than that which the piece they read was written. These writing exercises may contribute to the multigenre project. I will pass out a handout with genre suggestions for the multigenre project. The final project must consist of five pieces of writing, with at least one piece from each of the three lists I have given. Students may come up with alternate genres, but they must be approved by me.

Assessment for Multigenre Project:

An "A" Project will:

- Be turned in on time
- Include 5 or more genres, with at least one from each of the three required lists
- Portray a cohesive product, in which the combination of all pieces clearly addresses issues of self-identity
- Exhibit the student's voice and originality

A "B" Project will:

- Be turned in on time
- Include 5 or more genres, with at least one from each of the three required lists

- Portray a cohesive product, in which the combination of all pieces clearly addresses issues of self-identity
- Not exhibit the student's voice and originality

A "C" Project will:

- Be turned in on time
- Include 5 or more genres, with at least one from each of the three required lists
- Not portray a cohesive product, in which the combination of all pieces clearly addresses issues of self-identity
- Not exhibit the student's voice and originality

A "D" Project will:

- Be turned in on time
- Not include 5 or more genres, with at least one from each of the three required lists
- Not portray a cohesive product, in which the combination of all pieces clearly addresses issues of self-identity
- Not exhibit the student's voice and originality

An "F" Project will:

- Not be turned in on time
- Not include 5 or more genres, with at least one from each of the three required lists
- Not portray a cohesive product, in which the combination of all pieces clearly addresses issues of self-identity
- Not exhibit the student's voice and originality

3. Students will make a presentation of their multigenre project for the entire class. This presentation should be 10 minutes in length, and can take any form the student wishes. The presentation can be a PowerPoint slideshow, a movie, music, a traditional oral presentation, a performance piece, etc. The only stipulation for this presentation is that it must address the ways in which the student has personally engaged with the text during the unit.

Assessment for Presentation:

Presentations will be graded by both the teacher and the other students in the class using the following Rubric:

An "A" Presentation will:

- be delivered smoothly, holding the audience's attention.
- exhibit a large amount of original, creative thought.
- last between 8-10 minutes
- clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature

A "B" Presentation will:

- be delivered smoothly, holding the audience's attention.

- exhibit a large amount of original, creative thought.
- last between 8-10 minutes
- Not clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature

A "C" Presentation will:

- be delivered smoothly, holding the audience's attention.
- exhibit a large amount of original, creative thought.
- last less than 8 minutes
- not clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature

A "D" Presentation will:

- be delivered smoothly, holding the audience's attention.
- not exhibit a large amount of original, creative thought.
- last less than 8 minutes
- not clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature

An "F" Presentation will:

- not be delivered smoothly, not holding the audience's attention.
- not exhibit a large amount of original, creative thought.
- last less than 8 minutes
- not clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature

4. Students will complete a number of in-class writing exercises throughout the unit. These exercises will be taken up for a grade, but I will only grade grammar and mechanics **after** we have had a mini-lesson on the correct usage of said error. These exercises will be used to help get students thinking about their readings; therefore, they will be graded for originality of thought.

Assessment for in-class writing:

An "A" Paper will:

- exhibit original thought
- contain 0-2 errors we have discussed during our grammar mini-lessons

A "B" Paper will:

- exhibit original thought
- contain 3-5 errors we have discussed during our grammar mini-lessons

A "C" Paper will:

- exhibit original thought
- contain 6-10 errors we have discussed during our grammar mini-lessons

A "D" Paper will:

- exhibit original thought
- contain more than 10 errors we have discussed during our grammar mini-lessons

An “F” Paper will:

- contain no original thought
- contain more than 10 errors we have discussed during our grammar mini-lessons

Unit Grading Breakdown

- Participation: **30%**
 - a) journals: 15%
 - b) in-class discussion 15%
- In-class writing exercises: **15%**
- Multigenre project: **35%**
- Presentation: **20%**
 - a) peer-evaluation: 10%
 - b) teacher-evaluation: 10%

Presentation Assessment

Presenter: _____

Assessor: _____

Did:	Yes	No
The presenter deliver a smooth presentation That held your attention?		
The presentation exhibit original, creative Thought?		
The presentation last for at least 4 minutes?		
Did the presentation clearly express the student's personal connection with the literature?		
Totals		

Other thoughts/feedback:

Introductory Activity

Day 1

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes:

Explain that we are beginning a unit on self-discovery, and that we will be reading about characters who are trying to figure out who they are. Tell students that for the next six weeks I want them to really think about who they see themselves as, and how they see other people. Explain writing as mirror/window metaphor. Then break students into groups of four. Pass out “On the Road to Find Out” lyrics (Appendix A) and play song. After playing the song, have students discuss in small groups what they think the song is about. After small group discussion, have each group share with the class their thoughts/ideas, followed by whole class discussion.

5 minutes:

Pass out writing prompt (Appendix B)

As a model, I will read aloud my example, which I gave myself 2 minutes to write:

“Vegetarian, dog-lover, knitter, soap maker, guitar player, organic gardener, karaoke singer. I love to read and write, and wish I had been a writer. I am left-handed. My astrological sign is Libra. I love music, especially old blues and Motown.”

After two minutes, take up all papers and have students take out another sheet of paper.

15 minutes:

Have students number 1-10 on paper. Randomly select ten students’ self-descriptions, read them aloud, and have all students write down who they think is being described. After reading all ten, reveal true identities of each description. Take a survey to see how many people got all correct, half correct, etc. Open up the room for discussion of how people knew/didn’t know their fellow classmates by their given descriptions.

10 minutes:

I will read aloud the first three pages of “From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun”. We will discuss how the book is written in the form of a teenage boy’s journal, and parallel that to the journals the students will be keeping during the semester. If time permits, I will have students write in their journals for the remainder of class time. Suggested ideas for today’s journal: either reflect on your experience with the self-description activity or

continue to explore who you are.

2 minutes:

Assign Chapters 1 and 2 of “From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun”. Tell students to continue thinking about identity as they read the first two chapters of the book. I will also remind them to begin journaling their responses to the literature.

Week One

Day 2

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: Open discussion of first two chapters from the book. I will encourage students to share their reactions to the reading and to delve deeper into their own thoughts/questions. If necessary, I will be prepared to begin the discussion in order to get students started talking.

5 minutes: Briefly explain the Multi-genre project to students, and pass out the list of genres (Appendix C). Discuss the importance of choosing the best genre for each writer's piece.

20 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Have students write a response to the first two chapters in any genre from Group 1. Encourage them to take risks, and not to worry about grammar/mechanics. Explain that I will be taking these up for a grade, but that I will be only checking for authenticity of thought/creativity, not grading grammar or mechanics. If time permits, also ask them to write a brief explanation of why they used their chosen genre for this writing. This will help them begin to think about the importance of genre choice in writing.

5 minutes: Read aloud "Alone" (p.27-28 from Melanin) Suggest writing about their own feelings of being alone in their journals. Assign Chapters 3-8, and have students read silently for the remainder of class.

Day 3

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping-pass back the papers from yesterday.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar. I will use this time to address any big problems I noticed from the writing or to answer any other questions students may have. I will explain to them that I will only grade them on grammar/mechanics for mistakes they make after I've discussed the correct usage in class.

20 minutes: Break class into groups of 4-5, and have them discuss their reactions to Chapters 1-8. They may share their journal entries or their writing exercises from yesterday with their groups for workshopping if they so desire, or they may just spend the time talking about their personal reactions to the book so far. Explain that after the 20 minutes has passed, they will be asked to share their discussions with the entire class. I will circulate around the room to make sure the groups are staying on topic.

15 minutes: Whole class discussion. Each group will share with the class what they

discussed in their groups. I will help facilitate discussion, if necessary.

2 minutes: Assign Chapters 8-11.

Day 4

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Remind students that they must turn in at least 3 journal entries tomorrow.

5 minutes: Ask students to take five minutes to come up with as many words as they can think of that describe Melanin Sun.

10 minutes: Have students get into their groups and whittle down the list to ten words that best describe this character, and then have them write those ten words on the board.

15 minutes: After eliminating any duplicate words, lead class in discussion of Melanin based on the descriptions listed on the board.

15 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Have students write about either Melanin or about themselves using any genre from group 2. Encourage them to make connections between themselves and Melanin, if they notice any similarities. Remind them that they will only be graded for creativity unless they make errors discussed in class Wednesday. Take up papers after 15 minutes. Again, if time permits, have them write a brief explanation of genre choice.

2 minutes: Read aloud “Thirteen-Going-on-Fourteen” (p. 83 from Melanin). Assign chapters 12-14, and again remind them that they must turn in at least 3 journal entries tomorrow in class.

Day 5

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back papers from yesterday and take up journals.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we’ve discussed correct usage in class.

25 minutes: Break students into their small groups and have them share their writings on Melanin. Encourage them to begin thinking about what writings they would like to include in their multigenre projects. Explain the importance of peer-review, and tell them that their final presentations will be graded by their classmates. As always, I will circulate the classroom to make sure students are staying on-topic.

12 minutes: In-class reading. Students will decide whether to read silently or aloud for the remainder of class. I will assign the rest of the book to be read over the weekend.

Week 2

Day 1

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Using any genre from group 3, have students write about their personal reactions, feelings, and reflections about Melanin now that they have finished reading the book. Remind them that they will only be graded for creativity unless they make errors discussed in previous classes. Take up papers after 15 minutes. Again, if time permits, have them write a brief explanation of genre choice.

15 minutes: Whole class discussion of our thoughts on Melanin.

15 minutes: Introduce the book, Go Ask Alice. Explain to students that even though we are moving on to a new book, I encourage them to continue making connections between characters from all of our readings and themselves. Discuss the fact that we are again reading a book that is written as a personal journal, but that this one is a real, nonfiction journal of a young girl. Read first diary entry from the book.

2 minutes: Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students to read my comments and bring their journals back to class tomorrow. Assign pages 2-20 for homework. Remind students to continue journaling at least three entries each week.

Day 2

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday. Tell students that I will be available at the end of class to speak w/any students individually who have questions/concerns about the comments I left in their journals.

15 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

30 minutes: Open discussion of first 20 pages from the book. I will encourage students to share their reactions to the reading and to delve deeper into their own thoughts/questions.

2 minutes: Assign pages 21-41. Remind them to continue journaling, and to come speak with me if they have any questions about my comments in their journals.

Day 3

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping.

25 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Take twenty minutes to right about your readings so far using any genre from any group **which you haven't yet written in**. Tell students they will be sharing this writing in small groups. Remind them that they will only be graded for creativity unless they make errors discussed in previous classes.

20 minutes: Have students break into small groups and share their writing with the group. I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Assign pages 42-63. Remind students to continue writing in their journals, and to complete at least three entries per week.

Day 4

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday.

15 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

30 minutes: Open discussion of the book. I will encourage students to share their reactions to the reading and to delve deeper into their own thoughts/questions.

2 minutes: Assign pages 64-84. Remind students that journals are due tomorrow.

Day 5

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up journals.

15 minutes: Explain Venn diagram, and model one on the board with student suggestions depicting the similarities/differences in two celebrities of their choice.

15 minutes: Break students into their small groups and have them create a Venn diagram depicting similarities/differences in Melanin and the character from Alice.

15 minutes: Have students share their diagrams with the whole class. Explain to students that they could use a Venn diagram as one of their pieces in their multigenre paper, and that they could not only compare characters to each other but also compare themselves to a character they are reading about.

2 minutes: Assign pages 85-103.

Week 3

Day 1:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: In class read aloud of next section of book.

30 minutes: Open discussion the book. I will encourage students to share their reactions to the reading and to delve deeper into their own thoughts/questions.

2 minutes: Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students to read my comments and bring their journals back to class tomorrow. Assign reading from where we left off in class to page 125.

Day 2:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

10 minutes: Pass out hand out and explain “A Bump in the Road” assignment (Appendix D) Have students write their questions on the top of paper.

20 minutes: In small groups, have students respond to each other’s questions in writing and then discuss the questions with the group.

15 minutes: Invite groups to share any of the questions they discussed in small groups with the whole class.

2 minutes: Assign pages 126-149. Remind students to continue writing in their journals.

Day 3:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

25 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Take twenty minutes to right about your readings so far using any genre from any group **which you haven’t yet written in**. Tell students they will be sharing this writing in small groups. Remind them that they will only be graded for creativity unless they make errors discussed in previous classes.

20 minutes: Have students break into small groups and share their writing with the group. I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Assign pages 150-161.

Day 4:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

45 minutes: In class silent reading to finish the book. When they finish reading, have students write in their journals for the rest of the period.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave. Remind students that journals are due tomorrow.

Day 5:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up journals

25 minutes: Open discussion of the book. I will encourage students to share their reactions to the reading and to delve deeper into their own thoughts/questions. We will talk about similarities/differences in Melanin and Alice.

20 minutes: In small groups, have students review Venn diagrams from last week and update them now that they have finished reading Alice.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave.

Week 4

Day 1:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping.

10 minutes: I will give a brief “book talk” on both The House on Mango Street and The Catcher in the Rye. I will then explain that students must choose to read one of these two books in literature circles, and I will separate them into 5 groups based on their book choice.

20 minutes: I will pass out a handout with information about Literature circles and descriptions of each of the “jobs” that must be assigned within each group. Students will decide in each group who will be assigned to each position, and write names next to their corresponding duty. (See Appendix F).

15 minutes: Explain that they will have to read their chosen book by next Thursday, and that they will need to decide in each group how many pages to read each night for discussion in their group each day. Encourage them to spend the rest of class time organizing/coordinating with their group.

2 minutes: Take up sheets (Appendix F) with each groups assigned jobs/timeline of their reading. Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students to read my comments and bring their journals back to class tomorrow. Remind students to continue writing in their journals and to bring the journals to class each day.

Day 2:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping.

15 minutes: In class writing exercise. Free write. Write about anything from any book we've read in class so far in this unit. Use any genre you want, but give me a brief explanation of your chosen genre. Remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

30 minutes: Students work in their literature circles. Explain to students that each lit circle is reading at their own chosen pace; therefore, they shouldn't "spoil" anything for other groups who haven't read as far ahead. I will circle the room to make sure each group is staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Remind students to read their assigned pages for tomorrow and to continue writing at least 3 journals each week.

Day 3:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

10 minutes: Open discussion about Multigenre paper. We are now at the midpoint for this unit, if anyone has any questions/concerns about the summative assessment (the multigenre piece) they should be addressed and cleared up now. If students are reluctant to discuss their questions/concerns in class, encourage them to speak with me individually after class. Explain that all multigenre papers are due on Friday of Week 7, and that presentations will take all week of Week 8. Then pass around sign-up sheet for presentations. (Appendix F)

25 minutes: Students work in literature circles.

2 minutes: Remind students to read their assigned pages for tomorrow and to continue writing at least 3 journals each week.

Day 4:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping.

10 minutes: Introduce mandalas to the class via www.mandalaproject.org. Look at examples of mandalas on the website. Explain that students could use a mandala as one of their exhibits in their multigenre project.

15 minutes: Have each student create their own mandala using pen and paper. The mandala should be related to the book they are reading.

20 minutes: Have students move into their literature circles, and share their mandalas

with the group. If time permits, have them do literature circle “work” after sharing the mandalas.

2 minutes: Remind students that journals are due tomorrow.

Day 5:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up journals.

15 minutes: Whole class discussion of yesterday’s mandala project. Did everyone in your lit circle create a similar mandala? How were they different? Again, remember not to “spoil” anything for other groups who are reading the same book.

20 minutes: Students work in literature circles. As always, I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic. Also, remind students that they should be half-way done with their books by now. They must have finished reading the book before next Friday.

12 minutes: In-class silent reading for the rest of class.

Week 5

Day 1:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

20 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Have students write an individual response to their book in any genre from Group 1 **that they have not yet written in**. Give a brief explanation of your chosen genre. Remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we’ve discussed correct usage in class.

25 minutes: Students work in literature circles. As always, I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students to read my comments and bring their journals back to class tomorrow. Remind students to continue writing in their journals and to bring the journals to class each day.

Day 2:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we’ve discussed correct usage in class.

35 minutes: Students work in literature circles. As always, I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Remind students to read their assigned pages for tomorrow and to continue writing at least 3 journals each week.

Day 3:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping.

5 minutes: Explain that I will hold individual conferences with students to discuss their progress with the multigenre piece next week. Pass around a sign-up sheet (Appendix G) for conferences.

40minutes: Students work in literature circles for the final time during this unit. As always, I will circle the room to make sure students are staying on-topic.

2 minutes: Remind students that they must be finished with their books and ready to discuss them by class time tomorrow

Day 4:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

45 minutes: In literature circle groups, pass out Appendix H. (directions for today) They will have the rest of the period to come up with some form of expression to share their experiences with their chosen book with the rest of the class tomorrow.

2 minutes: Remind students that journals are due tomorrow.

Day 5:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up journals.

45 minutes: Have one (or more) member of each group share their piece from yesterday with the class.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave for the day.

Week 6

Day 1:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: Introduce students to the graphic novel, Ghost World. Talk about the comic

book as a literary genre and an option for their multigenre piece.

30 minutes: Silent reading of first two chapters (pages 1-21) of Ghost World. Anchor Activity: Work on multigenre paper.

****During this time, I will hold the first 5 individual conferences with students about their multigenre project.**

2 minutes: Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students to read my comments and bring their journals back to class tomorrow. Remind students to continue writing in their journals and to bring the journals to class each day.

Day 2:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: Whole class discussion of first two chapters of Ghost World. Discussion ideas: What do you think about the graphic novel genre? How does Enid compare to other characters we've read about during this unit?

30 minutes: Silent reading of Chapters 3 and 4 (pages 22-39). Anchor activity: Write in journal. ****During this time, I will hold the next 5 individual conferences with students about their multigenre project.**

2 minutes: Remind students to continue writing in journals.

Day 3:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

10 minutes: Pass out found poem handout (Appendix I). In small groups, have students write found poem from Ghost World.

10 minutes: Have each group share their found poem with the class.

25 minutes: Silent reading of Chapters 5 and 6 (pages 40-52). Anchor activity: work on multigenre papers. ****During this time, I will hold the next 5 individual conferences with students about their multigenre projects.**

2 minutes: Remind students that to continue writing in their journals.

Day 4:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Have students write an individual response to the book in any genre from Group 2 **that they have not yet written in**. Give a brief

explanation of your chosen genre. Remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

30 minutes: Silent reading of the rest of the book. Anchor activity: write in journal. .
**During this time, I will hold the next 5 individual conferences with students about their multigenre projects

2 minutes: Remind students that journals are due tomorrow.

Day 5:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up journals. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

30 minutes: In literature circle groups, have students discuss their multigenre projects with each other and give feedback. **During this time I will meet with the last 5 students for individual conferences on their multigenre project.

7 minutes: Watch clip from the movie adaptation of Ghost World.

Week 7

Day 1:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

30 minutes: In-class writing exercise. Write (in any genre of your choice) about what it would be like if Enid met a character from one of the other books we've read during this unit or if you met Enid.

15 minutes: Have students share their writing in small groups.

2 minutes: Pass back journals with my comments. Tell students that since we aren't reading any more books for this unit, they don't have to keep a journal this week. Encourage them to look through their journals for excerpts they may want to include in their multigenre paper.

Day 2:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass back writing exercises from yesterday.

10 minutes: Mini-lesson on grammar, mechanics, usage problems that I may have

noticed in the writings from yesterday. Again, remind them that they will only be penalized for mistakes after we've discussed correct usage in class.

15 minutes: Introduce students to body biographies. Give them handout (Appendix J) explaining our adaptation of body biographies. Split into 5 groups so that one body bio is done for each character: Melanin, Alice, Esperanza, Holden, and Enid.

20 minutes: Have students begin their body biographies.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave

Day 3:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

45 minutes: Continue working on body biographies.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave

Day 4:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping

45 minutes: Continue working on body biographies.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave. Remind students multigenre papers are due tomorrow.

**Although it may not take this long, I'm giving three days to work on body bios. This will allow the schedule to be adjusted in case of other conflicts that may arise (pep rallies, fire drills, etc)

Day 5:

3 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Take up multigenre papers.

45 minutes: Each group will present and explain their body bio to the rest of the class.

2 minutes: Prepare to leave. Remind them of the presentation schedule for next week.

Week 8

Day 1:

2 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass out peer assessment sheets.

48 minutes: First five presentations

Day 2:

2 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass out peer assessment sheets.

48 minutes: Next five presentations

Day 3:

2 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass out peer assessment sheets.

48 minutes: Next five presentations

Day 4:

2 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass out peer assessment sheets.

48 minutes: Next five presentations

Day 5:

2 minutes: Attendance/Housekeeping. Pass out peer assessment sheets.

48 minutes: Last five presentations

Appendix A

“On the Road to Find Out”
By Cat Stevens

Well I left my happy home to see what I could find out
I left my folk and friends with the aim to clear my mind out
Well I hit the rowdy road and many kinds I met there
Many stories told me of the way to get there

So on and on I go, the seconds tick the time out
Theres so much left to know, and Im on the road to find out

Well in the end Ill know, but on the way I wonder
Through descending snow, and through the frost and thunder

Well, I listen to the wind come howl, telling me I have to hurry
I listen to the robins song saying not to worry

So on and on I go, the seconds tick the time out
Theres so much left to know, and Im on the road to findout

Then I found myself alone, hopin someone would miss me
Thinking about my home, and the last woman to kiss me, kiss me

But sometimes you have to moan when nothing seems to suit yer
But nevertheless you know youre locked towards the future

So on and on you go, the seconds tick the time out
Theres so much left to know, and Im on the road to findout

Then I found my head one day when I wasnt even trying
And here I have to say, cause there is no use in lying, lying

Yes the answer lies within, so why not take a look now?
Kick out the devils sin, pick up, pick up a good book now

Appendix B

Name: _____

Who are you? You will have two minutes to write as much as you can about who you truly are. Think beyond just physical descriptors. Write what you are passionate about, what moves you, what makes you different from everyone else. Keep in mind that your responses will be shared with the class, so please don't write anything you don't want the entire class to know about you.

Appendix C

Multigenre Project

Genre choices

Group 1

Ads
 Applications
 Awards
 Billboards
 Bloopers
 Blurbs
 Bumper stickers
 Cartoons/Comics
 Captions
 Couplets
 Dedications
 Epilogues
 Epitaphs
 Game
 Greeting cards
 Haiku
 Headlines
 Introductions
 Invitations
 Jingles
 Jokes
 Labels
 Lists
 Map
 Metaphors
 Menus
 Memos
 Obituaries
 Odes
 Pamphlets
 Photo captions
 Prologues
 Proverbs
 Puns
 Questions
 Rhymes
 Riddles
 Signs
 Similes
 Slogans
 Soundtracks
 Telegrams
 Thank-you notes
 Theater programs
 Titles
 Vignettes
 Want Ads
 Warnings
 Wedding Invitations

Group 2

Advice Columns
 Announcements
 Anthems
 Ballads
 Character sketches
 Collages
 Definitions
 Descriptions
 Directions
 Fables
 Folklore
 Ghost stories
 Gossip
 Horoscopes
 Information Guides
 Insults
 Journals
 Legends
 Love notes
 Lyrics
 Memories
 News articles
 Opinions
 Orders
 Parables
 Parodies
 Poems
 Reactions
 Rebuttals
 Requests
 Resumes
 Sentences
 Serenades
 Serials
 Sermons
 Songs
 Sonnets
 Spoofs
 Sports articles
 Superstitions
 Stories
 TV commercials
 Tall tales
 Travel brochures
 Travel logs
 Tributes
 Trivia
 Wills
 Wishes

Group 3

Autobiographies
 Bedtime stories
 Biographies
 Reviews
 Conversations
 Dialogue
 Diaries
 Dual Thoughts/Inner Monologue
 Essays
 Fairy Tales
 Fantasies
 Feature articles
 History
 How-To's
 Inquiries
 Interviews
 Letters
 Magazine Articles
 Memoirs
 Monologues
 Mysteries
 Myths
 Plays
 Reports
 Satires
 Sequels
 Soap Operas
 Speeches

Appendix D

“A Bump in the Road”

Take a few minutes to think about Go Ask Alice. Write down a problem or question you have about your reading so far. After you've written down a question, pass your paper to the group member to your right and take the paper of the group member to your left. Write down your answer or a follow-up question, and continue passing papers to the right until all group members have answered all questions.

Appendix E

Literature Circles

For the next two weeks, you and 4 of your classmates will be participating in literature circles. These are like book clubs where you choose the pace at which you will read and you facilitate discussion of the book all on your own. Within your literature circle, each member will have a specific job.

Discussion Director: _____

This person will be responsible for keeping the group's discussions on task. You will need to write down a list of questions that come directly from your own personal reading of the book, and you will use these questions to direct the discussions in your group.

Connector: _____

This person will be responsible for finding connections between your book and the outside world. This includes making connections with other books you've read, movies you've seen, experiences you've had in your own life, etc.

Literary Luminary: _____

This person's job is to choose passages from the book to discuss in your circle. Pick out sentences or paragraphs that you found insightful, funny, confusing, interesting, etc.

Illustrator: _____

This person's job is to draw a picture related to what you read. This can be your vision of a particular scene from the book, an abstract feeling you got from a passage, a drawing of the setting of the book, etc.

Vocabulary Enricher: _____

Your job is to find words in the text that are unfamiliar to you. Look these words up in a dictionary and write down the definition. You may also write down words that you believe are important in the book.

Reading Timeline

While you may choose the pace at which your group will read, the book must be finished by next Thursday. Please decide on a reading timeline, and write down your plan in the space provided below.

Appendix F

Presentation Sign-up Sheet

Monday Presentations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Tuesday Presentations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Wednesday Presentations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Thursday Presentations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Friday Presentations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Appendix G

Conference Sign-up Sheet

Monday Conferences

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Tuesday Conferences

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Wednesday Conferences

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Thursday Conferences

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Friday Conferences

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Appendix H

Artistic Expression

Now that you have finished reading either The House on Mango Street or The Catcher in the Rye in literature circles, your group must create some form of artistic expression to share with the class. This could be a reenacted skit from the book, a song, an illustrated book cover, a collage, a comic strip, or anything else you can think of! Just remember that you will be sharing this with others who have not read the book, so you want to provide a good explanation of your piece.

Appendix I

Found Poem

A found poem is created by choosing words or phrases found in a text and rearranging them to create a work of poetry. In your small groups, pick several words from Ghost World and put together to form a poem. Be creative with spacing and punctuation!

Appendix J

Body Biographies

A body biography is a visual illustration of a character from a book. For this exercise, you will be illustrating a body biography of _____.

Each member of your group will have a job, as you did in the literature circles. Please assign a group member to each of the following jobs:

Builder: _____

This person will be responsible for keeping the group organized and on task. You will need to write down a list of everyone's ideas and help keep the project organized.

Connector: _____

This person will be responsible for finding connections between your book and the outside world. This includes making connections with other books you've read, movies you've seen, experiences you've had in your own life, etc.

Literary Luminary: _____

This person's job is to choose passages from the book to discuss in your circle. Pick out sentences or paragraphs that you found insightful, funny, confusing, interesting, etc.

Illustrator: _____

This person's job is to draw the body biography based on the input of your group members.

Vocabulary Enricher: _____

Your job is to find words in the text that are unfamiliar to you. Look these words up in a dictionary and write down the definition. You may also write down words that you believe are important in the book. These words can then be written into the body bio.