UNIT OVERVIEW TEMPLATE

Content Area: African-American Literature

Unit Title: Historical Origins

Target Course/Grade Level: 11 – 12: Elective

Unit Summary: This unit will introduce students to the history of African-American literature beginning with the distinctive tradition of African rhetoric including oral storytelling, spirituals, folktales and myths. Study will include an examination of the impact of the European slave trade and relocation of Africans to the Americas on that tradition.

Approximate Length of Unit: 3 – 4 weeks

Primary interdisciplinary connections: Social Studies, Technology

LEARNING TARGETS

Standards: Reading: Informational Text 6 – 12
Writing 6-12
Speaking and Listening 6-12
21st-Century Life & Career Skills

Content Strand: R.IT.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
R.IT.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
R.IT.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
R.IT.11-12.9 Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.
W.11-12.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.
a. Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of 18th, 19th and early 20th century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).
b. Apply grades 11-12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., The Federalist, presidential address]”).

SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

21st-Century Life & Career Skills
9.1.12.A.2 Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or outside projects.
9.1.12.D.1 Interpret spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context.
9.1.12.D.2 Determine the immediate and long-term effects of cross-cultural misconceptions or misunderstandings resulting from past or current international issues or events.
Unit Understandings

Students will understand that…

- African peoples created a rich tradition of rhetoric that greatly influenced the literature of African-Americans and the world.
- The European slave trade relocated millions of Africans to various parts of the world, including the Americas (Brazil, Columbia and the U.S.).
- The traditional spirituals, folktales, myths, religious songs and sermons served multiple purposes in the lives of the newly enslaved African peoples and provides a basis for the literature that developed thereafter.

Unit Essential Questions

- What is the European Slave Trade?
- What is rhetoric?
- How was the rhetoric of African peoples impacted by the European Slave Trade?
- What traits of traditional African spirituals, folktales, myths, religious songs and sermons are incorporated in African-American literature?
- How did the enslaved African-Americans sustain the traditional African rhetoric despite their relocation to a new continent?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know…

- The definition and history of the European Slave Trade
- The definition and history of traditional African rhetoric
- The developmental history of African-American literature based on traditional African rhetoric

Students will be able to…

- Interpret and analyze historical texts
- Analyze the style, power and beauty of traditional African spirituals, folktales, myths, religious songs and sermons
- Analyze the founding documents of the United States as they relate to the newly enslaved African peoples

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Assessment

What evidence will be collected and deemed acceptable to show that students truly “understand”?  

Performance Tasks:  - Students will research, select and deliver orally short performance pieces from the rich catalogue of traditional African spirituals, folktales, myths, religious songs and sermons.  
- Students will write and develop original performance pieces that model the African-American rhetoric analyzed

Other Evidence:  Quiz on historical texts and documents  
Written assessments in the form of weekly blogging via Google blog service (www.blogger.com)

Learning Activities

What differentiated learning experiences and instruction will enable all students to achieve the desired results?

1. Listen to recorded traditional spirituals, folktales, myths, religious songs and sermons. Students will break into small groups to analyze selected pieces. Students will create performance pieces of their own modeled after analyzed pieces. Goal: to understand the cultural, political and social significance of the tradition of oral rhetoric.

2. Gallery walks – photos of children of African descent who were relocated around the world during the European slave trade will be placed around the room. Students will identify the ethnicities and nationalities of those children. Goal: to understand the cultural connection of people of African descent who were relocated around the world.

3. View reprints of real U.S. documents that capture the country’s race-related history including slave trade records, The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address. Goal: to understand the literary significance of historical documents.

4. Use the internet to create an ongoing discussion via the class blog site. Weekly questions, statements, short passages from literary texts will be posted and each student will be required to respond. The trending dialogue will be used as a springboard for further in-class discussions. Goal: to use technology to interrogate the texts read critically as a learning community.
Teacher Resources:

- www.africawithin.com
- www.blogger.com
- www.pbs.org
- www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org
- Dark Voyages
- Freedom’s Story: Teaching African-American Literature and History
- The Oxford Anthology on African-American Poetry
- The Norton Anthology for African-American Literature
- Elements of Literature Fifth Course and Fourth Course (textbooks)
- Supplemental handouts

Equipment Needed:

- Computer and Internet access
- Audio/video equipment
- Trade books and textbooks
Content Area: African-American Literature

Unit Title: Colonial and Post-Colonial Literature

Target Course/Grade Level: 11 – 12: Elective

Unit Summary: This unit will analyze African-American slave narratives and abolitionist writings. Study will include an examination of the infusion of traditional African rhetoric and folk culture with the experience of enslavement, oppression and subsequent survival and emancipation of African peoples in the Americas.

Approximate Length of Unit: 3 – 4 weeks

Primary interdisciplinary connections: Social Studies, Technology

LEARNING TARGETS

Standards: Reading: Literature 6 – 12
Writing 6 – 12
Speaking and Listening 6-12
21st-Century Life & Career Skills

Content Strand: RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
RL.11-12.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)
RL.11-12.9 Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
   a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
   b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
   c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). 
   d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
   e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.

b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or outside projects.

Interpret spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context.

Determine the immediate and long-term effects of cross-cultural misconceptions or misunderstandings resulting from past or current international issues or events.

Unit Understandings:

Students will understand that...

- Newly enslaved African peoples contributed greatly to the American literary cannon.
- During enslavement in the Americas, the traditional African rhetoric began to incorporate discussions of the conditions of the system of slavery and a resistance to the brutality and oppression inherent in that system.
- Slave narratives authored by the enslaved and newly freed Africans in America provided an understanding of the duality of slave life – a quest for freedom and a feeling of sympathy for the slave owner.
- Abolitionist and other African-American writers issued a rallying cry for the development of a new identity and self-discovery of the enslaved and the newly freed Africans in America.
- The African-American literature of this period is a deeply beautiful reflection of a difficult, challenging historical period in American culture.

Unit Essential Questions:

- What were the conditions of slavery in the United States and how were the conditions reflected in the literature of the period?
- How did the slaves use traditional African rhetoric in opposition to slavery and as a means of developing a new identity?
- What were the literary contributions of the abolitionists?
- How can we determine the authenticity of the slave narratives?
- Upon emancipation, how did the conditions of the newly freed Africans in America impact the literature of the period?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

- The history of slavery in America
- The role of the abolitionist movement
- The development of African-American literature in relation to the development of a new identity of Africans in America

Students will be able to...

- Interpret and analyze historical and literary texts
- Analyze the meaning of words and how they are used to enhance African-American literature
- Analyze the various genres of African-American literature and evaluate how those various genres deal with the issues of the period
- Analyze how the topic and themes of the Colonial and post-Colonial periods are treated in 18th – early 20th century African-American literature
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Assessment

What evidence will be collected and deemed acceptable to show that students truly “understand”?

Performance Tasks: Students will research, select and deliver orally excerpts from an abolitionist writing

Other Evidence: Written assessments in the form of weekly blog entries based on focus questions/trending topics related to the literature read via Google blog service (www.blogger.com)

Quiz on key abolitionists and their works

Use of computer software such as Power Point or Photo Story to creatively depict one or more of the themes presented in the literary works analyzed

Learning Activities

What differentiated learning experiences and instruction will enable all students to achieve the desired results?

5. View reprints and photos of original abolitionist writings from the Library of Congress and History.com
6. Use the internet to create an ongoing discussion via the class blog site. Weekly questions, statements, short passages from literary texts will be posted and each student will be required to respond. The trending dialogue will be used as a springboard for further in-class discussions.
7. Read excerpts from slave narratives and view photographs, including Frederick Douglass and others utilizing the Library of Congress’ Federal Writers Project 1936-1938 collection. Each student will select one individual about whom he/she will create a memorial using any artistic medium that combines written and visual information.

RESOURCES

Teacher Resources:

http://www.history.com           Video – Origins of Slavery in America
http://www.africanholocaust.net  African-Holocaust (audio)
http://www.pbs.org/               Dark Voyages
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org Reconstruction and the Formerly Enslaved

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Classic Slave Narratives
The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. Dubois
The Oxford Anthology on African-American Poetry
The Norton Anthology for African-American Literature
Abolitionist Newspapers
Supplemental handouts

Equipment Needed:

  Computer and Internet access
  Audio/video equipment
  Projector and screen
  Trade books and textbooks
Content Area: African-American Literature

Unit Title: Civil Rights Movement Literature

Target Course/Grade Level: 11 – 12: Elective

Unit Summary: This unit will analyze literature in the form of text, film, video and audio from the mid 20th century Civil Rights Movement. Study will include an analysis of the political, social and judicial climate of the U.S., the Caribbean and South America as explored by the writers, public speakers and artists of the 1940’s, 50’s and 60’s. There will be specific focus on the developing identity of African-Americans as explored in the literature of the period.

Approximate Length of Unit: 3 – 4 weeks

Primary interdisciplinary connections: Social Studies, Technology

LEARNING TARGETS

Standards: Reading: Literature 6 – 12
Writing 6 – 12
Speaking and Listening 6-12
21st-Century Life & Career Skills

Content Strand: RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

RL.11-12.7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

RL.11-12.10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

SL.11-12.3 Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

SL.11-12.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11–12 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 54 for specific expectations.)

21st-Century Life & Career Skills

9.1.12.C.4 Demonstrate leadership and collaborative skills when participating in online learning communities and structured learning experiences.

9.1.12.D.1 Interpret spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context.

9.1.12.F.2 Demonstrate a positive work ethic in various settings, including the classroom and during structured learning experiences.
Unit Understandings:

Students will understand that...

- The Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century was a pivotal time in American history that evidenced great struggle and success in bringing the country together over issues of racial segregation, housing and employment practices.
- Civil Rights activists varied in approaches to the issue and a variety of ideologies emerged including those of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., SNCC, the Black Panthers, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam, and others.
- The equal rights and protections sought by African-Americans in the United States served as a model for Africans in the Caribbean and South America as well and vice versa.
- Landmark legal battles fought against Jim Crow practices coupled with protest and resistance to bring about change.
- African-American writers, historians and filmmakers documented this movement through firsthand experience and observation.
- There is a range of poetry, literature and music that focuses on the aspirations of African-Americans, the pride and process of protest, the impact on the individual and the collective, and the impact this movement had on the civil liberties enjoyed today.

Unit Essential Questions:

- What is the meaning of Civil Rights and what world models did these freedom fighters aspire in this struggle?
- How did the writers of the Civil Rights Movement capture the feelings, fears, mood and climate of the period?
- How did the different ideologies impact both positively and negatively the progress toward equality in the Americas.
- What is the power and impact of great speeches, both for and against Civil Rights for African-Americans?
- Who were some of the key figures in the Civil Rights Movement and what were their contributions to the movement?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

- The Civil Rights Movement shaped the political, social and judicial climate of the United States, the Caribbean and South America of today.
- There is a profound meaning/impact on today of the literature created during and after this period.
- The push toward civil rights and racial equality discussed in the literature of this period that continue to be modeled around the world today.

Students will be able to...

- Interpret and analyze historical and literary texts.
- Analyze the meaning of words and how they are used to enhance African-American literature.
- Analyze the various genres of African-American literature and evaluate how those various genres deal with the issues of the period.
- Analyze how social, economic and political conditions of the 1940’s, 50’s and 60’s are treated in African-American literature of this period.
- Compare and contrast the Civil Rights issues in the United States with those in the Caribbean and South America.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Assessment

What evidence will be collected and deemed acceptable to show that students truly “understand”?

Performance Tasks: Students will research poets, writers, musicians and speakers of the Civil Rights Movement.

Students will select one legal case to research and find (or create an original) a creative piece that expresses the significance of the legal case.

Students will research the protest songs written and performed during or about this period. Students will then create a modern protest song that models the format of the Civil Rights Movement song they chose, but speaks to a contemporary issue.

Other Evidence: Written assessments in the form of weekly blog entries based on focus questions/trending topics related to the literature read via Google blog service (www.blogger.com)

Quiz on key Civil Rights leaders, writers and their works.
Learning Activities
What differentiated learning experiences and instruction will enable all students to achieve the desired results?

8. View oral histories of participants in the Civil Rights Movement.
9. Listen to audio recordings of Civil Rights Movement songs, speeches and poetry.
10. View film on events of the Civil Rights Movement.
11. Literature circles.
12. View artwork that captures the mood of this period and use the artwork to compare to/interpret the texts read.
13. Use the internet to create an ongoing discussion via the class blog site. Weekly questions, statements, short passages from literary texts will be posted and each student will be required to respond. The trending dialogue will be used as a springboard for further in-class discussions.

RESOURCES

Teacher Resources:

http://www.njamistadcurriculum.com Units 11 and 12
http://www.wgbh.org Freedom Riders
http://www.pbs.org/ The Power of Great Speeches and The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow – Oral History Overview
http://www.antislavery.eserver.org/poetry Henry Wadsworth Longfellow anti-slavery poetry
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org The Civil Rights Movement
http://facinghistory.org A Pivotal Moment in the Civil Rights Movement
http://bostonpublicschools.org Civil Rights Curriculum

The Oxford Anthology on African-American Poetry
The Norton Anthology for African-American Literature
Supplemental handouts

Equipment Needed:

- Computer and Internet access
- Audio/video equipment
- Projector and screen
- Trade books and textbooks
Content Area: African-American Literature

Unit Title: Harlem Renaissance Literature

Target Course/Grade Level: 11 – 12: Elective

Unit Summary: This unit will analyze literature in the form of text, music, film, television and art from the Harlem Renaissance period. Study will include an analysis of the social, economic and political conditions that propelled the Great Migration to northern cities such as Harlem, NY and how those conditions were captured and explored in the work of the creative artists of the period.

Approximate Length of Unit: 3 – 4 weeks

Primary interdisciplinary connections: Social Studies, Technology

LEARNING TARGETS

Standards: Reading: Literature 6 – 12
Writing 6 – 12
Speaking and Listening 6-12
21st-Century Life & Career Skills

Content Strand: RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RL 11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
RL.11-12.9 Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
b. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
   b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11-12.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

SL.11-12-1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.

b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

SL.11-12.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11–12 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 54 for specific expectations.)

21st-Century Life & Career Skills

9.1.12.C.4 Demonstrate leadership and collaborative skills when participating in online learning communities and structured learning experiences.

9.1.12.D.1 Interpret spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context.

9.1.12.F.2 Demonstrate a positive work ethic in various settings, including the classroom and during structured learning experiences.

Unit Understandings:

Students will understand that...

- The social, economic and political climate of the southern states prompted the Great Migration of African-Americans to northern states in large numbers in the early years of the 20th century; these people brought with them a rich culture of music, art and literature and received immense financial support by patrons of the arts.
- African-Americans created a new social and cultural landscape in the United States
- The economic crisis of the Great Depression brought an end to the spending on the arts, thus forcing many great contributors to the Harlem Renaissance into poverty.
- The literature, music and art of the Harlem Renaissance Period reflects the quest of African-Americans in the 20th century to secure an American identity and to be accepted as true Americans.

Unit Essential Questions:

- What were the conditions of the south versus the north in the United States in the early 1900s and how were these conditions reflected in the literature of the period?
- How did the writers of the Harlem Renaissance address civil rights and equality concerns?
- What were the literary contributions of the Harlem Renaissance writers?
- During and after the Great Depression, what happened to the writers and other artists who gained fame during this period?
- How did this pre-war period affect the legal, social and economic concerns of African-Americans?
- Why have music and art continued to play an integral part in the political/social struggle of African-Americans?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

- The social, economic and political conditions that created the Harlem Renaissance
- The lasting literature and impact on American literature to come from this period
- The development of African-American literature in relation to the development of a new identity of Africans in America
- The push toward civil rights and racial equality discussed in the literature and songs of this period
- The visual and recording artists who emerged in this period captured the essence of the conflict of being African in America

Students will be able to...

- Interpret and analyze historical and literary texts
- Analyze the meaning of words and how they are used to enhance African-American literature
- Analyze the various genres of African-American literature and evaluate how those various genres deal with the issues of the period
- Analyze how social, economic and political conditions of the 1920s are treated in African-American literature of this period
- Interpret the visual and recorded arts for the messages they relayed about the period
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Assessment
What evidence will be collected and deemed acceptable to show that students truly “understand”?

Performance Tasks: Students will research poets and writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Students will select one jazz or blues (instrumental) song and put the words of a Renaissance poet to the music. Presentations will include an interpretation of the music as well as the poem.

Students will select one visual artist from the Harlem Renaissance period to research and create a visual project using any digital media to present their findings about the artist’s life, artistic motivations and significance of his/her work.

Other Evidence: Written assessments in the form of weekly blog entries based on focus questions/trending topics related to the literature read via Google blog service (www.blogger.com)

Quiz on key Harlem Renaissance writers and their works.

Learning Activities
What differentiated learning experiences and instruction will enable all students to achieve the desired results?

14. Listen to jazz and blues artists of the period.
15. View video of performances in Harlem, NY during this period.
16. Listen to audio recordings of Renaissance writers reading their work.
17. Read poetry, short stories, literary fiction and non-fiction from the Renaissance period.
18. View visual art of the period.
19. Literature circles.
20. Use the internet to create an ongoing discussion via the class blog site. Weekly questions, statements, short passages from literary texts will be posted and each student will be required to respond. The trending dialogue will be used as a springboard for further in-class discussions.

RESOURCES

Teacher Resources:

http://www.njamistadcurriculum.com
http://www.history.com
http://www.pbs.org/
http://www.phillipscollection.org
http://www.loc.gov
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org

Unit 10
The Harlem Renaissance (video)
The Blues
Jacob Lawrence The Migration Series
The Image of Africa in the Literature of the Harlem Renaissance
Jazz in African American Literature
The Oxford Anthology on African-American Poetry
The Norton Anthology for African-American Literature
Supplemental handouts

Equipment Needed:
Computer and Internet access
Audio/video equipment
Projector and screen
Trade books and textbooks
Content Area: African-American Literature

Unit Title: Contemporary Literature

Target Course/Grade Level: 11 – 12: Elective

Unit Summary: This unit will analyze and critique literature of contemporary African-American writers, poets and lyricists, examining various genres of this literature, including modern day spoken word, hip hop and rap lyrics. This unit will focus on the lasting influence of traditional African rhetoric on contemporary African-American literature. Study will examine how the strivings for social, political and economic equality continue to surface in today’s literature and have a far-reaching, global impact.

Approximate Length of Unit: 3 – 4 weeks

Primary interdisciplinary connections: Social Studies, Technology

**LEARNING TARGETS**

Standards: Reading: Literature 6 – 12  
Writing 6 – 12  
Speaking and Listening 6-12  
21st-Century Life & Career Skills

Content Strand: RL.11-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.5 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

RL.11-12.10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.11-12.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12 on page 54.)

W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

SL.11-12-1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.

b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

SL.11-12-2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility
and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

SL.11-12.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11–12 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 54 for specific expectations.)

21st-Century Life & Career Skills

9.1.12.D.1 Interpret spoken and written communication within the appropriate cultural context.
9.1.12.D.2 Determine the immediate and long-term effects of cross-cultural misconceptions or misunderstandings resulting from past or current international issues or events.
9.1.12.F.2 Demonstrate a positive work ethic in various settings, including the classroom and during structured learning experiences.

Unit Understandings:

Students will understand that…

• The sometimes blurred role of African-Americans within the larger American society is a recurring theme of modern day literature
• In the aftermath of slavery, the struggle for equality and persistent racism, African-American writers continue to capture the painful and emotional triumphs and setbacks that are part of the African-American experience.
• African-American writing has continued to incorporate the oral storytelling traditions of its African origins in the form of spirituals, sermons, gospel music, blues, hip hop and rap.
• African-Americans have contributed to a new social and cultural landscape in the United States that has crossed racial, ethnic and economic boundaries and, some critics say, done more for racial relations than any political or judicial initiative ever has.
• There is a duality in the experience of being an African-American visual, literary and recording artist

Unit Essential Questions:

• How do contemporary African-American writers address the social concerns faced by African-Americans today?
• How does the varied dialects and use of oral strategies enhance the literature of African-American writers?
• How has contemporary African-American literature shaped and altered the cultural landscape of the United States, serving to bring people together worldwide?
• Have the messages of social, political and economic inequality changed dramatically in the late 20th/early 21st centuries?
• How have modern theater and the Hollywood film industry been impacted by writings by and for African-Americans?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know…

• How writers ranging from Toni Morrison and Alice Walker to Tupac Shakur and Talib Kweli use language to express meaning
• There is a continuing impact on American literature to come from this period
• There is a global impact of the literature of this period, both socially and economically
• Contemporary African-American literature is developing in relation to the development of a new identity of Africans in America
• There is a continued push toward racial equality and harmony discussed in the literature of this period
• American theater and film have reshaped the images of African-Americans

Students will be able to…

• Interpret and analyze historical and literary texts
• Analyze the meaning of words and how they are used to enhance African-American literature
• Analyze the various genres of African-American literature and evaluate how those various genres deal with the issues of the period
• Analyze how contemporary social, economic and political conditions are treated in African-American literature of this period
• Analyze song lyrics over the past 30 years for shifting messages

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Assessment

What evidence will be collected and deemed acceptable to show that students truly “understand”?

Performance Tasks: Students will research contemporary African-American poets, writers and lyricists. Students will deliver oral interpretations of selected works.

Students will examine a contemporary social issue that is important to them. Using the style of one of the genres of literature studied from this unit, students will write their own literary piece that presents that social issue and either offers a solution to the problem or is a call to action.
Learning Activities

What differentiated learning experiences and instruction will enable all students to achieve the desired results?

21. Listen to audio of rap and hip hop artists of the period, beginning with the late 1970s.
22. View video of spoken word performances during this period.
23. Read plays, poetry, short stories, literary fiction and non-fiction, rap, hip hop and spoken word lyrics from the period.
24. View visual images of African-Americans depicted in mainstream magazines, video and film and compare with images examined during the review of the colonial/post-colonial period.
25. Use the internet to create an ongoing discussion via the class blog site. Weekly questions, statements, short passages from literary texts will be posted and each student will be required to respond. The trending dialogue will be used as a springboard for further in-class discussions.

RESOURCES

Teacher Resources:

http://www.njamistadcurriculum.com  Unit 12
http://www.pbs.org/  The History Detectives Investigation: Birthplace of Hip Hop
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org  Music and the African American Literary Tradition
The Oxford Anthology on African-American Poetry
The Norton Anthology for African-American Literature
Toni Cade Bambara: Gorilla My Love
Tupac Shakur: A Rose
Supplemental handouts

Equipment Needed:

Computer and Internet access
Audio/video equipment
Projector and screen
Trade books and textbooks