



THE HONORS PROGRAM

**“She Stands for Freedom”:
A Thematic Unit Plan for 4th and 5th Graders**

*A Honors Capstone Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation with
University Honors*

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Abstract

According to researchers such as Bell (1984) and Fisher (1991), few activities are more powerful for developing historical empathy than engaging students in role-play. This thematic unit plan for fourth and fifth grade children integrates the learning objectives and skills required by The Common Core State Standards. It consists of a two-act play, *The Golden Door*, and sample lesson plans that include assessments. Beginning with the Statue of Liberty, the original theatrical work will introduce numerous historical figures as well as interesting historical tidbits, and familiarize students with famous women (as opposed to men), while also allowing teachers an opportunity to address topics such as bullying, stereotypes, gender roles, and multiculturalism. It also lends itself nicely to connections among different subject areas. Examples include introducing a famous woman whose actions are related to the chapter; writing reports on famous American women; using mathematical statistics from the Statue of Liberty to create math problems; introducing Science chapters on erosion/weathering and linking them to the renovation of the Statue of Liberty; exploring the stories of immigrants who arrived at Ellis Island; and researching the stories of the many historical figures introduced during the play. With minimal effort, teachers can link each of their required subjects to the central theme of “Famous Women in American History” and even devote time to subthemes such as “Famous Black Women in American History” or “Famous Women from Virginia in American History.”

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Introduction

I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being. –Oscar Wilde

According to researchers such as Bell (1984) and Fisher (1991), few activities are more powerful for developing historical empathy than engaging students in role-play: “Assigning children the roles of key personas from history, coaching them into appropriate postures, expressions, and feelings, and then allowing students to expand their research on the subject matter they are exploring may possibly be the most impactful experience which can take place in a classroom” (Fisher, 1991).

This project is a unit of study for fourth and fifth graders organized around famous women in American history. Consisting of a play script entitled *The Golden Door* and sample lesson plans that include assessments, this unit integrates the learning objectives and skills required by The Common Core State Standards. Teachers may connect this pre-packaged thematic unit to a number of different subject areas math, science, social studies, language arts, art, music, and even physical activities. Indeed, sample lesson plans include Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Art, and Music. These connections help children in the way they learn best, through meaningful experiences, reinforcement, and integrated learning.

One important aim of including samples lesson plans and assessment ideas in this unit is to free up valuable classroom/planning time. Instead of formulating the next day’s lesson, educators can use this freed up time to focus on students. Teachers can also address the need to

offer students multiple learning modalities to employ Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

Although I already have published several books and plays written for children, in this unit I apply educational components that I have been exposed to here at Gallaudet University regarding meaningful learning (Sammons and Hart, 2003) as well as the added development in playwriting. Equally important, I am proud to choose a theme that brings women in history into the spotlight and do it in ways that allow teachers to address topics such as bullying, stereotypes, gender roles, and multiculturalism.

Integrated, Thematic Learning

Shoemaker (1989) defines an integrated curriculum as "education that is organized in such a way that it cuts across subject-matter lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. It views learning and teaching in a holistic way and reflects the real world, which is interactive."

According to authors such as Katz (1989) or Kostelnik, Soderman & Whiren (2004), the idea of working with thematic units is not new, and they are normally planned around a book, a theme, an author, or any topic that has interest for young children. Many elementary school educators choose themes such as dinosaurs, space, various animals, or specific events as the focus for thematic unit plans in their classroom; they then use those topics to create a common theme for their everyday lesson plans. I believe that using a play as the center of an integrated curriculum is a strategy based on the premise that all learning represents a series of interconnections between the various subjects taught in American elementary schools: Science, Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Art, Music, and Physical Education. The play I want to

write would be about famous women in American history, with a special focus on the Statue of Liberty and immigration.

This play would be beneficial to teachers because it would give them a unique theme for their lesson plans, projects, and activities while allowing them to cover a variety of interesting material, concepts, and skills. The entire unit provides students multiple avenues for the integration of other content areas such as writing, social studies, science, math, language arts, and technology to be integrated into meaningful learning activities. Using the play as a starting-point/center of reference, students could then be given a lot of leeway to explore topics, people, and ideas that interest them. They could then share what they have learned and be assessed on their presentations as well as the processes they used in learning.

According to Katz and Chard (1989), thematic units are wonderful for integrating content areas in a way that makes sense to children allowing them to transfer what they have learned and apply it in meaningful ways, while addressing the diverse learning styles of individual students. They build on students' interests and prior knowledge helping them relate what they learn to real-life experiences and building on what they already know. Fisher (1991) concurs: "Thematic teaching units involve a group of correlated activities that are designed around topics or themes and cross several areas of the curriculum. They provide an environment that fosters and encourages process learning and active involvement of ALL students."

Other benefits of utilizing thematic units in the classroom include:

1. Interesting presentation of in-depth factual information (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 2004)
2. Students become physically involved with learning
3. Students learning processing skills

4. Students are exposed to new ways in which to “learn how to learn”
5. This approach integrates learning in a holistic way (Krogh, 1990)
6. Promotes group cohesiveness
7. Addresses the varying individual needs of learners (Shoemaker, 1989)
8. Motivates children and teachers
9. Gives teachers a “product” (the performance itself) which they can present to parents, co-workers, and administrators.

Overview of Unit Theme: *She Stands For Liberty*

According to writers such as Glassberg (2003), and Harris (1985), between 1820 and 1920, approximately 34 million persons immigrated to the United States, three-fourths of them staying permanently. For many of these newcomers, their first glimpse of America was the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor. The Jewish American poet Emma Lazarus saw the statue as a beacon to the world, Hayden & Despont (1986). A poem she wrote to help raise money for the pedestal, and which is carved on that pedestal, captured what the statue has come to mean to the millions who migrated to the United States seeking freedom, and who continue to come to this day.

The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand

Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

--Emma Lazarus, 1883

In the play entitled *The Golden Door*, the Statue of Liberty and the Emma Lazarus' poem provide the catalyst for three students to search through American history trying to find "The Woman Who Stands for Freedom." The play opens with students seated in a classroom listening to an imaginary teacher. Soon, three of the students are bickering/taunting one another instead of paying attention to the lecture. When the imaginary teacher reprimands them, she asks a question based on the presentation, which the students cannot answer, so they are sent to the library to work together on writing a report about "The Woman Who Stands for Freedom." The students are perplexed; they have no idea where to start, and so they begin to bicker. At this point they are joined by "Uncle Sam," who will lead them through American history, introducing them to famous women and various other historical figures until the students learn to work together and solve the mystery.

The The Common Core State Standards

The play itself will provide students and educators with a hands-on learning experience. While it may seem like educators are simply exposing children to the literary genre of theatre, they would actually be addressing The Common Core State Standards in Reading in Literature. The standards listed below are from the The Common Core State Standards for fourth grade students, but by increasing the difficulty of the subject matter or adding additional depth to the research, this project would also be acceptable for fifth grade use and would meet those standards. Because the fourth and fifth grades share The Common Core State Standards, varying only in degree of difficulty and depth of research, it is a common practice for materials to be used interchangeably between the two grades.

Literature.

- RL.4.1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RL.4.2. Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- RL.4.3. Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

Craft and Structure.

- RL.4.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
- RL.4.5. Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of

characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

- RL.4.6. Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

- RL.4.7. Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
- RL.4.9. Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

Range of Reading and Complexity of Text.

- RL.4.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Making Connections

This original theatrical work for students will introduce numerous historical figures, interesting historical tidbits, and familiarize students with famous women (as opposed to men), while also allowing teachers an opportunity to openly address topics such as bullying, stereotypes, gender roles, and multiculturalism. It also lends itself nicely to acting as a “stepping stone” for other topics and/or subjects. (i.e.: introducing a famous woman whose actions are related to the chapter, writing reports on famous American women, using mathematical statistics from the Statue of Liberty to create math problems, introducing Science chapters on erosion/weathering

and linking them to the renovation of the Statue of Liberty, exploring the stories of immigrants who arrived at Ellis Island, or researching the stories of the many historical figures introduced during the play.) With minimal effort, teachers can link each of their required subjects to the central theme of “Famous Women in American History” and even devote time to subthemes such as “Famous Black Women in American History” or “Famous Women from Virginia in American History”.

Conclusion

The truth is, I have already successfully published a number of educational musicals for children, recently winning a National Teachers Association Award for my work “One Small Acorn.”(Hart and Sammons, 2003) While my other works were successful, I had no background in the field of education and those works were merely entertaining. If teachers wished to link them with lesson plans, they had to find the connections and do the work. After spending three years studying, learning, interning, and teaching while advancing through Gallaudet University’s Elementary Education Program, I feel that this project will be substantially different than anything I have been involved with before. Some major differences:

1. Having never been a teacher, I was not aware of The Common Core State Standards, or any other formal educational standards, when I successfully wrote and published my other plays. Having furthered my education in the field of Elementary Education, I feel ready for the challenge to expand upon the scope of my previous work.
2. I will actually be creating sample lesson plans using The Common Core State Standards and providing assessment tools which teachers can use to measure learning.
3. Developing pre-assessment, cognitive/affective assessment, and post-assessment for almost every lesson. I will be stressing this in the material itself.

4. This play, along with all the materials I create with it, will be geared towards educating. By applying educational standards to my play and linking it to the material within, I hope to create an original work which will have educational value, not only be entertaining to audiences.
5. This will be a truly educational project using a thematic unit plan approach. (Not merely a springboard for tying together educational ideas.)
6. The packaging, marketing, and formatting ideas I have for this project are very different from the simple Play-In-A-Box idea that I came up with six years ago. My vision for this Capstone would be to create a play which would serve as the cornerstone for an entire thematic unit plan incorporating different subject areas, including: math, science, social studies, language arts, art, music, and even physical activities. These connections help children in the way they learn best, through meaningful experiences, reinforcement, and multiple disciplinary integrated learning.

Many new teachers starting out in the field of education will agree there is a market for projects such as the one I am proposing. (Fisher, 1991) More importantly, if you look at the material I am presenting and the reasons I am presenting it, you will find there is an educational need for new and interesting approaches to thematic units. I think that my project is one such approach.

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The Golden Door**ACT I****Scene 1**

The scene begins with desks set up in a classroom. Children are seated at the desks and are all facing forward interacting with a make-believe teacher. The teacher is not a real character on stage, but the students will react as if there is someone in front of them delivering Mrs.

Stevenson's lines, which will actually come from a microphone off-stage.

(Charlie Brown style)

Sarah

(raises hand)

Amelia Earhart. She was not only America's most famous woman pilot; she was also the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean.

Jason

(shooting a spit-wad at SARAH and then quickly turning to accuse RICARDO.)

Ricardo, that was not very nice.

Ricardo

(looking up from the comic book he has hidden in his social studies book, confused)

Huh? What? I didn't...

Sarah

(SARAH glares at RICARDO angrily.)

Stop! I'm going to tell Mrs. Stevenson!

Jason

(mimicking SARAH)

STOP! I'm going to tell Mrs. Stevenson!

Ricardo

(irritated)

I didn't even do anything!

(points to JASON)

He...

Sarah

(Ignoring RICKY's protests...)

I don't care... stop! Some of us are trying to get an education.
Maybe if you paid attention in class you wouldn't spend so much
time in detention at lunch!

Ricardo

(Offended, RICARDO grabs the spit-wad shooter from Jason)

Give me that.

(RICARDO takes aim and hits Sarah)

Sarah

(Grabs the back of her head.)

Owww! Why you little creep! I'm going to tell...

Mrs. Stevenson

(From offstage)

WAH WAH WAH WAH WAH!

Jason

She started it...

Sarah

I did not! He was throwing...

Ricardo

I didn't...

Mrs. Stevenson

(From offstage)

WAH WAH WAH WAH WAH!

ALL

Yes ma'am!

Mrs. Stevenson

(From offstage)

WAH WAH WAH WAH WAH!

Jason

Extra work! But I have baseball!

Ricardo

Stay after school? My mom is going to kill me!

Sarah

A group assignment? With those two?

Mrs. Stevenson

(From offstage)

WAH WAH WAH WAH WAH!

Ricardo

The woman in American history who "stands for freedom"? I don't know!

Jason

Can you give us a clue?

Sarah

"You'll find her guiding people to the Golden Door". You haven't mentioned anything about a Golden Door during class. It's not in my notes... and I have perfect attendance!

Mrs. Stevenson

(From offstage)

WAH WAH WAH WAH WAH!

ACT I

Scene 2

The rest of the class leaves while SARAH, JASON, and RICARDO regroup into the center of the stage. On one of the walls there should be a picture frame where the character UNCLE SAM will stand frozen until his entrance.)

Ricardo

She stands for freedom...

Jason

What kind of clue is that?

Sarah

Actually, "She stands for freedom GUIDING PEOPLE TO A GOLDEN DOOR!"

Ricardo

Golden, huh? I'll bet nobody slams THAT door!

(JASON and SARAH give RICARDO a nasty look.)

What? I'm just saying...

Jason

This is awful. I'm going to miss baseball practice.

Sarah

I've never had to stay after school before! I wonder if this will go in my permanent record...

Ricardo

Well, let's get going. I don't want to be here all night... my mom just bought me a new video game.

Jason

What game did you get?

Sarah

Who cares what video game it is! We need to work on this together or I'm going to tell Mrs. Stevenson that you two didn't help at all.

(SARAH hands a book to JASON)

You start looking-up Golden Doors.

(SARAH hands a book to Ricardo)

You start researching women who stand for freedom.

(SARAH takes a stack of books to her table.)

And I'll look up... well, I'll supervise!

(RICARDO and JASON give SARAH a dirty look.)

OKAY!!! I'll start looking through the encyclopedias.

Jason

I found the Golden Gate Bridge, but nothing is in here about a "Golden Door".

Ricardo

There is plenty in here about freedom... but nothing about a lady who stands for it!

Jason

We're going to need some major help!

Sarah

My Aunt Thelma is a Professor of American History at Dartmouth...

Ricardo

(sarcastically)

Well, it's too bad she's not here, isn't it?

Jason

She probably wouldn't know the answer anyway. My Uncle is an expert in American History.

Sarah

Oh yeah? I'll bet you don't even have an uncle! What's his name?

Jason

(Jason sees the poster of Uncle Sam on the library wall.)

Um...uhhhhhhhh... well, Uncle... Sam! Yeah! Uncle Sam! My mother's brother.

(RICARDO and SARAH laugh.)

Ricardo

RE-E-E-EALLY? Well who is your mom? The Statue of Liberty!

Sarah

(skeptically)

Tell the truth, you don't even have an Uncle Sam! Do you?

Jason

Well...um...

Uncle Sam

(UNCLE SAM steps out of the frame.)

Ah, young lady—that's where I beg to differ, EVERY American has an "Uncle Sam"!

(UNCLE SAM tips hat.)

Ricardo

You're not...

Sarah

You are...

Jason

Are you...?

Uncle Sam

I am! But enough about me, the three of you have a bit of a problem here. I think I may be able to help.

Ricardo

So do you know who the woman who stands for freedom is?

Sarah

Or about this Golden Door she guides people into?

Jason

Is your beard real?

(RICARDO, SARAH, and UNCLE SAM give JASON a nasty look.)

Uncle Sam

Well friends, I can't just GIVE you the answer. This is something you need to learn for yourselves. But, I can certainly help guide you on your way.

(Thinks for a moment.)

I've got it! Come on, we're going on a little journey.

Jason

Alright! Road trip!

Sarah

I don't have a permission slip!

Uncle Sam

Don't worry, this "road trip" as you call it, will take care of itself. Follow me. We need to consult some experts on this one.

Jason

Experts?

Sarah

Are they professors?

Ricardo

Where exactly are we going?

Uncle Sam

The Black Hills of South Dakota. I have some friends in... shall we say, "high places".

SARAH, RICARDO, JASON, and UNCLE SAM
all march up and down the audience
while the scenery changes.

ACT I

Scene 3

When they make it back to the stage,
a Mount Rushmore scene is up with four
holes cut out for the presidents.

Uncle Sam

Here we are, Mount Rushmore. Carved into the granite of South
Dakota's Black Hill Mountains, it took 14 years and almost \$1
million dollars to create this monument to four of our nation's
greatest leaders.

Sarah

Wow! That is so cool!

Jason

I'm missing baseball practice for this?

Ricardo

What does this have to do with our assignment? I don't see any
women or Golden Doors... just these rock-heads!

Washington

Excuse me! Young man, is that any way to speak about your elders? When I was your age...

Jefferson

If he starts talking about that cherry tree again, I'll... I'll choke him!

Roosevelt

Calm down Mr. Jefferson. You don't have hands. Remember?

Lincoln

Gentlemen! Mind your manners. We have guests.

Uncle Sam

Children, I would like you to meet "the experts". Over here we have George Washington, first President of the United States. Next to him we have Thomas Jefferson, 3rd President and author of the Declaration of Independence. This gentleman right here is Theodore Roosevelt; he was our 26th President as well as a great reform leader. And last, but certainly not least, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President and the leader who abolished slavery from American soil.

Roosevelt

Uncle Sam, it's good to see you again!

Jefferson

Who are these fine young people?

Sarah

I'm Sarah, this is Ricardo, and that's Jason. Since these two were misbehaving in class, the three of us have to give a presentation to the class tomorrow about the Woman in American History who stands for freedom.

Jason

Yeah, she stands next to some Golden Door she guides people to.

Ricardo

Can you help us?

Washington

Golden Door, eh? When I was your age, you see, there was this cherry tree...

Jefferson

That's enough George!

(muttering to himself)

If I had hands...

Lincoln

Gentlemen!

Roosevelt

Sounds pretty valuable, this Golden Door. Do you know anything else about it?

Ricardo

Uncle Sam thought you guys would know. He said you were the experts.

Sarah

If you can't help us, I don't know what we're going to do!

Jason

They're probably in the third inning. At this rate, I'll never get back in time to play.

Washington

Experts, eh? Well, yes, I suppose we are.

Jefferson

You say this lady "stands for freedom"?

Roosevelt

I can think of several ladies that might fit that bill.

Ricardo

Who?

Sarah

Where can we find them?

Jason

How much longer is this going to take?

Lincoln

Excuse us for a moment.

(The Presidents whisper among themselves.)

Jason

Do you think they can help us?

Sarah

I think we should get extra credit for all this additional work.

Ricardo

I don't know about you guys, but I think these guys may have a "few pebbles loose"... if you know what I mean.

All Presidents

WE HEARD THAT!

Uncle Sam

Patience, my friends! You'll get your answer in good time.

Roosevelt

(Roosevelt clears throat.)

We have a small problem.

Lincoln

It seems that we have come to a difference of opinion as to who this mysterious woman may be.

Jefferson

But we can offer a few suggestions... then you'll just have to decide for yourselves.

Roosevelt

Mr. Washington...

Washington

As you all know, I cannot tell a lie. There are several ladies who come to mind. But in my humble opinion, this one...

(pauses then laughs to himself)

...“STANDS” out...

ALL

(All the characters on-stage except Washington groan, shake their heads, and/or roll their eyes)

Washington

(laughs)

Get it? "Stands" out?

Jason

(impatiently)

Who?

Washington

Elizabeth Griscom.

Sarah

I've never heard of her, and I have read ahead TWO WHOLE CHAPTERS in our Social Studies book!

Ricardo

If Sarah hasn't heard of her, than I sure as heck know I haven't!

Washington

(patiently)

You might know her by a slightly different name... she was also known as Mrs. Betsy Ross. When it comes to freedom, I think she is something of an expert.

Jefferson

Excellent suggestion!

Roosevelt

Wonderful choice Mr. Washington!

Lincoln

What a grand lady!

Washington

Mr. Jefferson?

Jefferson

Over two hundred and thirty years ago when I penned the Declaration of Independence, I wrote, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Children, since my time there have been MANY women who have stood for freedom; one of the greatest being Ms. Sojourner Truth, a former slave who became one of history's greatest abolitionist and a founder of the Women's Rights Movement.

Roosevelt

Jolly good choice!

Lincoln

That's a winner!

Washington

A definite possibility.

Jefferson

Mr. Roosevelt, would you like to introduce our third candidate?

Roosevelt

Mr. Jefferson, it would be my honor. On December 1, 1955, a 42-year-old African American woman who worked as a seamstress boarded a Montgomery City bus to head home from work. On the bus that day, Ms. Rosa Parks initiated a new era here in American for freedom and equality.

Washington

Oh yes, excellent suggestion.

Jefferson

A true symbol of freedom!

Lincoln

You children certainly have your work cut out for you!

The Tour Guide leads a group of Tourists on-stage. The Tourists should all be dressed in Hawaiian shirts, cameras, hats, and look like "typical gaudy tourists".

Tour Guide

(in a droning "lecture voice")

Please look to your right. Mount Rushmore, also known as the Shrine of Democracy, is a National Monument and Memorial depicting four of the most prominent presidents of the first 150 years of the United States - George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Thomas Jefferson.

Uncle Sam

Gentlemen, your next tour is here. Thank you for all your help, but we really should be going.

All Four Presidents

Good luck.

All Three Children

Thank you! Thanks for all your help. Goodbye Mr. Presidents.

Tour Guide

(bored)

Mount Rushmore was carved into South Dakota's Black Hills from 1927 to 1941 under the direction of sculptor Gutzon Borglum. The project took a team of 400 drillers and assistant carvers fourteen years to complete. Over 800 million pounds of stone were removed using dynamite, detailed drilling, and finishing processes.

Tourist (Little Johnny)

(Johnny poses for a picture in front of Mt. Rushmore)

Mom! Mom! Take a picture.

Mom

Turn a little to your right... now, just a little to the left.
Give mommy a big smile!

(Right before the camera flashes all four presidents make funny faces behind Johnny's back unnoticed by anyone on-stage.)

Meanwhile Sarah, Jason, Ricardo, and
Uncle Sam move upstage center.

Ricardo

Uncle Sam, all three of their suggestions sound great!

Sarah

But here's the important question...

Jason

(mutters to himself)

How long is this stupid project going to take?

Sarah

Please ignore him. What I was going to say is, "How will we know which is the right one?"

Uncle Sam

The truth is... I'm not sure there is a "right" or "wrong" answer. America is great not because of one woman who stands for freedom, but because of ALL the men and women who have stood and WILL stand. But, your teacher did give us a clue right?

Sarah

Oh yeah! "You'll find her guiding people to the Golden Door".

Ricardo

THAT should be hard to miss!

Uncle Sam

Well children, I guess we are off to Philadelphia in the year 1776 to meet Mrs. Betsy Ross.

Jason

Betsy Ross... I've heard of her. She's a singer, right?

(JASON begins imitating the Supremes.)

"Stop, in the name of love..."

ALL

(ALL actors roll eyes and/or cover ears.)

Ricardo

(RICARDO shakes his head.)

That was DIANA Ross!

Sarah

(SARAH sighs)

I remember reading something about Betsy Ross. I think she was a seamstress or something during the Revolutionary War.

Jason

Sounds like as good a place as any to start. Uncle Sam, is this going to take very long? At this rate, I'm not only going to miss practice... I may miss my first game of the season.

Uncle Sam

(Leading the children off-stage right.)

When is your game?

Jason

Next week!

The lights go down and the stage empties.

ACT I

Scene 4

The lights come up and the scene begins with BETSY ROSS sitting in front of a colonial fireplace stage-left in a rocking chair sewing. (The actress should be working on a Colonial "Betsy Ross" flag, but it should be folded in such a way as to be unseen by the audience.) The children should enter stage right with Uncle Sam.

Uncle Sam

(UNCLE SAM chuckles)

Here we are... Philadelphia, May 1776. This is the home and seamstress shop of Ms. Betsy Ross.

Betsy

(BETSY looks up, notices her visitors, and sets her work on a table next to her.)

Uncle Sam!

(BETSY embraces UNCLE SAM and she turns to the children.)

And who might you be?

Sarah

I'm Sarah.

Ricardo

I'm Ricky.

Jason

(unhappily)

I'm missing baseball practice!

(SARAH elbows JASON.)

I mean, I'm Jason.

Betsy

Pleased to meet you! I'm Elizabeth Ross... but my friends all call me "Betsy".

Uncle Sam

(UNCLE SAM winks at the kids and briefly pantomimes the Supremes.)

Not to be confused with "Diana".

Jason

(Jason covers his face and looks embarrassed while everyone else snickers.)

Betsy

So... what brings you all the way to Philadelphia and the year 1776?

Ricardo

Well, Jason and I were goofing around in class when Miss. Know-it-all got involved, so the teacher gave us a group project to work on together.

Jason

Then Uncle Sam showed up and took us to Mount Rushmore where Mr. Washington said we should talk to you.

Sarah

We hoped that you might be the woman in American history that stands for freedom while guiding people through some golden door.

Betsy

(laughs)

I'm flattered that Mr. Washington would think of me as a woman who stands for freedom. But the truth is... I'm more of a "sew-er" than a "stander".

Ricardo

(excitedly)

Betsy Ross... Betsy Ross! I remember, you made the first American flag.

Betsy

Well actually, there were a great number of flags in use before mine... and that was a problem. According to legend, Mr. Washington, with a small committee from the Continental Congress, approached me with a rough design for the first American flag. I offered a few suggestions, including making the flag more symmetrical and using stars with five points instead of six. After flying the flag at the peak of one of their vessels, the committee brought the flag to the State House, and Congress unanimously approved it.

(BETSY should unfurl the completed colonial flag and display it for all.)

Thirteen white alternating stripes representing the original thirteen colonies. Then thirteen stars in a circle representing those colonies declaring their independence from the British and becoming one nation. This flag became the first OFFICIAL American flag.

Uncle Sam

And the rest, as they say, "is history".

Sarah

It really is beautiful!

Ricardo

Wow, I've never paid much attention to the flag before. Maybe I need to start paying more attention in Social Studies.

Jason

It's not really that different from the flag we use in our time... we've just added 37 more colonies... er, "states".

Uncle Sam

Reminds me of a song...

ALL

(ALL sing "It's a Grand Old Flag".)

She's a grand old flag,

She's a high flying flag,

And forever in peace may she wave.

She's the emblem of,

The land I love,

The home of the free and the brave.

Every heart beats true,

For the red, white, and blue,

With never a boast or a brag.

Should old acquaintance be forgot

Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

Sarah

(breathlessly)

I'm beginning to see why people get all excited over the flag!

Ricardo

My father is in the Army. He says that the flag not only represents America, it also represents each of the people who have sacrificed in order to protect our way of life.

Jason

Wow, I never really thought about it that way before. I'll never complain again when my coach says to stand up and take off my hat when they play the Star Spangled Banner at my games!

Betsy

(Smiling)

Each time you do that, you are showing respect for your country and the brave men and women who have worked so hard to protect it. In fact, by honoring the flag, YOU are "standing" for freedom.

Sarah

"Standing for freedom"... the homework, we were so busy learning about the flag, we almost forgot.

Ricardo

What are we going to do?

Jason

Uncle Sam... Mrs. Ross?

Uncle Sam

Well, I think our next step is to make a trip to Battle Creek, Michigan to the home of Isabella Baumfree... better known as Sojourner Truth, in the year 1895.

Sarah

How are we going to do that?

Jason

Are we going to use a time-machine?

Ricardo

(excitedly)

Are you going to use a wormhole through the time-space continuum like they do in the sci-fi movies?

Uncle Sam

(chuckles and then strokes beard thoughtfully)

I have something even better than a time-machine or a wormhole through the space-time continuum... it's called an "INTERMISSION".

Black-out, end of Act I

ACT II

Scene 1

Sojourner Truth's "podium" will be set-up stage right and Rosa Park's bench will be stage left. The scene opens with Jason, Sarah, Uncle Sam, and Ricardo entering from backstage munching on snacks.

Jason

Wow, that was easy.

Ricardo

Intermission is a lot better than using a time machine or a wormhole...

Sarah

Yeah, an intermission has cookies!

Sojourner Truth should be up on a soapbox/small stage on the right side of the stage surrounded by a small audience where she is delivering a speech.

Uncle Sam

Look, there she is... and it seems as if we are just in time to catch one of her famous speeches.

Sojourner Truth

Well, children, where there is so much racket... there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women of the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman?

Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman?

I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief... none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? (member of audience whispers, "intellect")

Intellect! That's it, honey! What's that got to do with women's rights or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it... and the men had better let them!

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say.

Sojourner Truth steps down and starts shaking hands with her audience as Uncle Sam waves her over.

Sojourner Truth

Oh my! If it's not Uncle Sam... and with three young friends!

Sarah

Ms. Truth, your speech was amazing! I remember reading about you in our social studies book.

Ricardo

(Rolls eyes)

Of course you remember reading it! You read the entire book before school even started!

Jason

(fake sneezes)

Achoooooo-Nerd!

Sarah

I knew you spoke-out against slavery, but I didn't know you also fought for women's rights.

Jason

(Mockingly to Ricky) Women have rights?

Ricardo

Duhhhhhh!!! The right to do the laundry and make dinner!

Sojourner Truth

(Ignoring Jason and Ricky)

Young lady, while it is important for all men to get their rights, I've always wanted women to get theirs too. Too often women have tolerated the scorn of others instead of demanding to be treated as equals. She should be willing to stand-up against anyone who would oppress her and make sure her voice is heard.

Sarah

Sometimes we just think it's easier to ignore stupid comments because we don't want to start an argument or be called "sensitive".

Sojourner Truth

Some arguments just need to happen.

(pokes Sarah)

If you keep letting people poke you... YOU are the one who will have the bruise.

Sarah

You're right Ms. Truth. I think it's time I started standing-up for myself right now.

(Climbs on top of Sojourner's box, turns to Jason and Ricky)

Jason! Ricardo! I don't like it when you guys make jokes that put me down.

Jason

We're just kidding.

Ricardo

We don't mean anything by it.

Sarah

I know, but it hurts my feelings.

Jason

I didn't know.

Ricardo

We really didn't mean it. I guess sometimes we get a little jealous.

Sarah

Jealous? Of me?

Jason

Yeah, sometimes it seems you know everything.

Ricardo

For me, school is hard. I wish I knew the things you know.

Sojourner Truth

Each of us has our own skills and interests. You don't need to know everything Sarah knows,

(points to Ricardo)

because you know the things Ricardo knows...

(points to Jason)

and you know the things Jason knows. If you remember one thing I say today, just remember: blowing out another person's candle will not make yours shine any brighter.

Uncle Sam

That's really true here in America, here there is room for all of us to shine! That light... that Diversity, has made our nation strong.

Sojourner Truth

Diversity and equality are what I stand up on that box teaching about every day!

Jason

(Looks around puzzled)

Diversity and equality are both important parts of freedom, but where is your Golden Door?

Sojourner Truth

(looks confused)

Golden Door?

Ricardo

The one you guide people to when you are "Standing for Freedom".

Sojourner Truth

(Laughs good-naturedly)

Honey, there ain't no Golden Door around here. And I don't "stand for freedom"... I just try to encourage people to stop blowing out candles, because the world could use a little less darkness and a little more light.

Uncle Sam

I think all of us have learned something this visit, but it's time we were going. Thank you Ms. Truth!

Sojourner Truth

It was nice to see you again Uncle Sam.

(gestures to the children)

Keep lighting candles.

Sojourner Truth exits stage right.

ACT II

Scene 2

Uncle Sam and the children meet center stage.

Ricardo

I didn't know Social Studies was so full of interesting people.

Jason

Yeah, this has ALMOST been worth missing baseball practice for.

Sarah

Uncle Sam. Where to now?

Uncle Sam

(gestures to stage left where Rosa Parks has entered and sat down on the bench.)

Uncle Sam and the children cross to where Rosa Parks is sitting.

Rosa Parks

Uncle Sam!

Uncle Sam

Hi Rosa! Let me introduce you to my three young friends: Sarah, Jason, and Ricardo. Children, this is Mrs. Rosa Parks.

Jason

Nice to meet you.

Sarah

I've seen your picture on the bulletin board during African American History Month, but we haven't gotten to your chapter yet.

Ricardo

(thinking)

Rosa Parks... Rosa Parks...

(excitedly)

I know who you are! You are the Black woman who wouldn't give up her seat on a segregated bus and started the Civil Rights Movement!

Sarah

How do YOU know and I don't?

Ricardo

(sheepishly)

You're not the only person reads ahead.

Jason

(laughs)

He's gotcha there!

Uncle Sam

Rosa, can you tell us your story?

Rosa Parks

In 1900, Montgomery Alabama passed a city ordinance to segregate bus passengers by race. The first four rows of seats on each Montgomery bus were reserved for whites. Buses had "colored" sections for black people in the rear of the bus. The sections were not fixed but were determined by placement of a movable sign. Black people could sit in the middle rows until the white section filled; but if more whites needed seats, blacks were to move to the back, stand, or, if there was no room, leave the bus. Black people could not even sit across the aisle in the same row as white people. And if white people were already sitting in the front, black people had to enter the front, pay the fare, then get off and reenter through the rear door.

Sarah

That sounds awful!

Jason

How did you put up with that?

Ricardo

Shhhhhhhh! This is where the story gets good.

Rosa Parks

Thursday, December 1, 1955, in downtown Montgomery. I paid my fare and sat in one of the empty seats in the back of the bus reserved for blacks in the "colored" section. Soon all of the white-only seats in the front of the bus filled up and when several white passengers boarded the bus driver demanded that four black people give up their seats in the middle section so that the white passengers could sit.

When that white driver stepped back toward us, when he waved his hand and ordered us up and out of our seats, I felt a determination cover my body like a quilt on a winter night and I refused to give up my seat.

The bus driver called the police and they came and arrested me. As the officer took me away, I remember asking, "Why do you push us around?" And he answered, "I don't know, but the law's the law, and you're under arrest."

I knew that, as I was being arrested, that it was important to stand up against what I knew was wrong. I decided then and there that I would never allow myself to be humiliated again because of the color of my skin.

(shakes head)

People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.

Ricardo

You MUST be the woman our teacher was talking about! The Woman Who Stands For Freedom!

Rosa Parks

(laughs)

I don't know about "standing" for freedom... but you could definitely say I "sat" for it!

Sarah

But where is the Golden Door you lead people to?

Jason

(searches stage)

It has to be around here somewhere!

Rosa Parks

I'm sorry, but I don't know anything about a Golden Door.

Ricardo

It's not your fault. We just thought maybe we finally had the answer to our teacher's question.

Rosa Parks

Well don't give up. I have a feeling that you three are smart enough to find the answer.

(glances at her watch)

Well look at the time, I need to catch my bus.

(exits stage)

Oh good, there's an open seat up front!

Sarah

Bye!

Jason

It was nice meeting you!

Ricardo

Goodbye Mrs. Parks!

Sarah

So what do we do now?

Jason

Yeah, the Presidents only gave us three names.

Ricardo

I think all three women "Stand for Freedom"... but none of them lead people to a Golden Door.

Sarah

I guess we need to head back to the library and keep looking through those books.

Jason

Yeah, that's a good idea.

Ricardo

Uncle Sam, thanks for trying to help us.

Uncle Sam

Well children, if you don't mind, could we make one quick stop on the way back.

Sarah, Jason, and Ricardo

Sure.

Uncle Sam

(walks off stage)

Follow me.

Uncle Sam, Sarah, Ricardo and Jason will walk off the stage and into the audience. Uncle Sam will tell them about Ellis Island while they walk, giving everyone time to set-up the stage for the Statue of Liberty, her pedestal, and Emma Lazarus' poem.

Sarah

Where are we headed?

Uncle Sam

To New York. More specifically, to the New York Harbor... and Liberty Island.

Jason

Who is there?

Uncle Sam

An old friend, Lady Liberty.

Ricardo

Do you think your friend might be able to help us with our research?

Uncle Sam

You'll have to ask her.

ACT II

Scene 3

By this time The Statue of Liberty scene should be set-up and Uncle Sam can enter the stage with the children.

Sarah

Oh look, it's the Statue of Liberty!

Ricardo

Wow, it sure is a pretty statue. I've only ever seen pictures.

Jason

(grunts)

Hmmph, I always thought she'd be taller.

Lady Liberty

(Sticks her tongue out at Jason unnoticed by the children.)

Uncle Sam

The Statue of Liberty was designed by Frédéric Bartholdi and dedicated on October 28, 1886. The statue was a gift to the United States from the people of France and represents Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom, who bears a torch and a tablet upon which is inscribed the date of the American Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. A broken chain lies at her feet. The statue is an icon of freedom and of the United States: a welcoming signal to immigrants arriving from abroad.

Sarah

What's that writing on the pedestal?

Lady Liberty

That my dear, is a poem written by American poet Emma Lazarus called "The New Colossus":

The New Colossus

***Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"***

Jason

(shocked)

It... I mean "she" talks!

Ricardo

Jason, we just spent hours talking to four presidents carved into the side of a mountain...

Sarah

...and traveled through space and time to talk to three of the greatest women in American History...

Uncle Sam

...so of course she talks!

Lady Liberty

And for someone "much shorter" than some people expect,

(winks at Jason)

I have excellent hearing.

Jason

(embarrassed)

I didn't mean... I just...

Lady Liberty

I'm teasing you.

Ricardo

The last line of the poem you read said something about a "golden door".

Lady Liberty

It says, "I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Sarah

But where is the door? I don't see it.

Lady Liberty

(points out over the audience)

Do you see that little island over there?

(the children nod)

That's Ellis Island... the "Golden Door". You see, Ellis Island is a very remarkable and historical place; it is an island where many of your ancestors saw America for the first time. Fleeing hardships such as famine, poverty, political unrest, or religious persecution, immigrants journeyed to the U.S. in search of opportunity and freedom. They considered that little island to be the "Golden Door" where they could enter America.

Jason

(confused)

I thought this was Ellis Island?

Lady Liberty

An easy mistake since the two islands are so close to one another, but all of this...

(gestures at the pedestal and area around her)

...is actually Liberty Island. Ellis Island was the main immigration station for the United States from 1892 to 1954. More than 12 million immigrants were processed here. To many people Ellis Island represented the golden door to America because once immigrants met all of the requirements of the immigration process at the island, they were escorted to the mainland to begin a new life.

Sarah

So if Ellis Island is the "Golden Door" Mrs. Stevenson was talking about, where is the Woman Who Stands for Freedom who guides people?

Uncle Sam

(gestures up to Lady Liberty)

Lady Liberty

(raises torch which should light up)

Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Ricardo

You! You are the Woman Who Stands for Freedom!

Jason

Guiding people to the Golden Door!

Sarah

To their new lives!

Uncle Sam

That's right children. For over a century, the Statue of Liberty has stood valiantly in the open air, symbolizing freedom throughout the world. Lady Liberty has held a patriotic place in each and every American heart since she was unveiled in October 1886, her face has greeted each of the immigrants who passed through Ellis Island, announcing that their journey to the "land of the free" had finally come to an end.

And so too must OUR journey end. It's time to get you three back home... you have a presentation to prepare for.

Jason

Uncle Sam, how are we getting back? Time machine?

Ricardo

What about a wormhole through the time-space continuum like they do in the sci-fi movies?

Sarah

I like cookies... so I vote for another "intermission".

Uncle Sam

(smiles)

I have a better idea, it's called a "FINALE"

All the characters return to the stage, an American flag is brought out and everyone sings the Star Spangled Banner... then blackout.

Thematic Unit: Famous Women In American History

Rationale

“Famous Women In American History” works well as an integrated unit theme because it is possible to combine the Language Arts standards with Social Studies content in order to maximize interest and information.

The sample lesson plans for this unit focus on slavery in the United States and its relationship to freedom.

By using a variety of literary excerpts (poetry, short stories, etc.) and literacy activities to meet state standards and incorporate all six language arts (reading, writing, talking, listening, viewing, and visually representing), teachers will be able to further the understanding of their students in skills and content by connecting learning in this engaging, experiential activity.

Sample lesson plans show that students will write poetry, create journal entries, read various stories of slaves, participate in an Underground Railroad activity, make arts and crafts, and go on a fieldtrip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

This topic is appropriate for a fourth grade unit because students are mature enough to understand this dark part of our nation’s past. It is important to expose students to the history of slavery to open their eyes to the importance of treating others (different cultures, races, genders, etc.) with dignity and respect.

Unit Goals

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of slavery in the United States by preparing (and listening to other) oral (and visual) presentations.

- Students will understand the importance of effectively using oral communication to provide accurate directions to others by establishing an Underground Railroad.
- Students will demonstrate reading comprehension by applying new information to poetry and other written explanations.

Sample Lesson Plans

Chart of One Week's Lesson Plans

Day	Language Art/Social Studies (6)	State Standard(s)
Monday	Writing Listening	4.7 The student will write effective narratives, poems, and explanations. f) Write rhymed, unrhymed, and patterned poetry. 4.2 The student will make and listen to oral presentations and reports. b) Listen to and record information.
Tuesday	Reading Writing	4.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction. f) Summarize content of selection, identifying important ideas and providing details for each important idea.
Wednesday	Talking	4.1 The student will use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings. a) Present accurate directions to individuals and small groups.

	Viewing	4.6 The student will demonstrate comprehension of information resources to research a topic. a) Collect information, using the resources of the media center, including online, print, and media resources.
Thursday	Visually Representing	4.2 The student will make and listen to oral presentations and reports c) Organize information for clarity.
Friday	Writing	4.7 The student will write effective narratives, poems, and explanations. d) Write several related paragraphs on the same topic.

Freedom Unit Introduction – Monday

Unit Goal: Students will demonstrate reading comprehension of Social Studies related themes by applying new information gained from poetry and other written explanations.

Standards:

Writing: 4.7 – The student will write effective narratives, poems, and explanations.

f) Write rhymed, unrhymed, and patterned poetry.

Listening: 4.2 – The student will make and listen to oral presentations and reports.

b) Listen to and record information.

Lesson Title: Freedom Poetry**Performance Objectives:**

-Given a flip chart and markers, the students will work as a team to fill in the first two columns of a KWL chart with each student contributing to each column at least once.

-Given examples of narrative poetry, the students will be able to construct their own narrative poem (rhyming or not) about a major life event using 125 words or more.

-In small groups, the students will share their poems with each other; each student will read their poem aloud once.

Materials:

- flip chart/markers
- *Show Way* by Jacqueline Woodson
- other poetry/song examples
- paper/pencil

Preparation/Introduction:

- Open the floor for discussion:
 - Do you feel like you have freedom (at school, home, in the world, etc.)?
 - What if you weren't allowed to make your own decisions? How would you feel?
 - What if your parents sold you to another family to work for them?

- This week we will:
 - Learn about slavery/slaves in the US
 - Explore the Underground Railroad
 - Practice poetry
 - Make a “quilt”
- Today we will:
 - Create a KWL chart together
 - Learn about how slaves communicated with each other
 - Read an example – a story called *Show Way*
 - Practice poetry as a form of generational communication

Procedures:

- Introduction (as stated above)
- Discuss students’ background knowledge of slavery/underground railroad – KWL chart (student’s will write their own contributions and will sign with their initials)
- Share slavery poetry examples – *Show Way*, *The Slave Auction*, and *A Slave’s Life*
- Discussion questions (after):
 - What does “show way” mean? How do these poems tell stories?
 - What do the quilts in *Show Way* represent?
 - How do you communicate information and family stories now? Do you know a lot of stories about your family’s history? What if it was illegal to share stories with your family? Would you stop passing on your history?
- Write poems (see application)

- Break into small groups and share (appoint a group monitor to create a group roster)
- Regroup for wrap-up (also see closure)
 - Was it easy to write a story as a poem? What was easy? What was difficult?
 - How would you feel if this was the only way to tell stories? Do you think you would know as much about your family if this was the only way to share information?
 - Why/why not?
 - Any questions?
 - Tomorrow we will work with more stories from slaves to learn more about their experiences. We will continue to explore what life was like as a slave in the United States.

Application: Writing poems (students have prior experience with poetry)

- Put yourself in Soonie's family's shoes. Write a poem to share a story (something from your childhood, a family trip you went on, family traditions, etc.).
- Do you think it will be easy to tell a story as a poem? Why or why not? What needs to be included to make sure your reader knows it's a story? (characters, events, setting, etc.)
- Imagine that you will pass this poem on to your children so they can pass it to their children and so on. What information/details will you want to include?
- When finished, break into small groups and share your poems.

Assessment:

- Given a flip chart and markers, the students will work as a team to fill in the first two columns of a KWL chart with each student contributing to each column at least once.

- Student initials will be recorded next to their contributions
- Given examples of narrative poetry, the students will be able to construct their own narrative poem about a major life event using 125 words or more.
 - Student poems will tell about an event or a story and reach the appropriate length.
- In small groups, the students will share their poems with each other; each student will read their poem aloud once.
 - Participation in group sharing will be noted by the group monitor by a checkmark next to each participant's name.

Closure:

- Wrap-up
 - Was it easy to write a story as a poem? What was easy? What was difficult?
 - How would you feel if this was the only way to tell stories? Do you think you would know as much about your family if this was the only way to share information?
 - Why/why not?
 - Is there anything you want to add to the L column of the KWL chart?
 - Any questions?
 - Tomorrow we will work with more stories from slaves to learn more about their experiences. We will continue to explore what life was like as a slave in the United States.

Homework:

- (Optional) practice writing poems to share information in a clever way or tell stories

Accommodations:

- English support/assistance for KWL and/or written poem
 - Teacher or other students can act as scribe for KWL contributions
 - Student can dictate poem to teacher

Additional poetry examples:

A Slave's Life

By: Doug Tanoury

They say go and I go
They say do this and I do it
They say gather and I gather
They say sow and I sow
For I am but a common slave and
They a cruel and capricious master

Who cares nothing if I live or die
For my daughters are like sheep and goats
And my sons like camels and oxen
All my children in the fields
Are bent by this burden
And bear the rod of the taskmaster

And at night by the fires
Amid the smoke from the smoldering pots
I pray to the Lord who is my freedom
And my deliverance
Whose reach is greater than the Nile
And whose bounty flows more freely

The Slave Auction

By Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

The sale began—young girls were there,
Defenseless in their wretchedness,
Whose stifled sobs of deep despair
Revealed their anguish and distress.

And mothers stood, with streaming eyes,
And saw their dearest children sold;
Unheeded rose their bitter cries,
While tyrants bartered them for gold.

And woman, with her love and truth—
For these in sable forms may dwell—
Gazed on the husband of her youth,
With anguish none may paint or tell.

And men, whose sole crime was their hue,
The impress of their Maker's hand,
And frail and shrinking children too,
Were gathered in that mournful band.

Ye who have laid your loved to rest,
And wept above their lifeless clay,
Know not the anguish of that breast,
Whose loved are rudely torn away.

Ye may not know how desolate
Are bosoms rudely forced to part,
And how a dull and heavy weight
Will press the life-drops from the heart.

Freedom Unit – Tuesday

Unit Goal: The students will demonstrate reading comprehension by applying new information to poetry and other written explanations.

Standards:

- 4.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction.
- a) Summarize content of selection, identifying important ideas and providing details for each important idea.
 - b) Identify new information gained from reading.

Lesson Title: Freedom reading

Objectives:

- 1) Given the book *Show Way*, the students will summarize the content of a selection, identifying important ideas and providing details for each idea with 90% accuracy.
- 2) Given 14 discussion questions, the students will identify new information gained from reading with 100% accuracy.

Required Materials:

Show Way

Smart Board

Worksheets

Paper/Pencil

Flip Chart

Introduction:

Before the activity begins, we will review yesterday's activity briefly by asking them what did we do yesterday and what did they learn yesterday. The students are welcome to read their homework to the class and they will add to the L column of the KWL chart.

Then, I will share that my goal is for them to learn how to summarize the book.

I will start with questions about the book, Show Way, which they already discussed yesterday.

The questions will be showed below.

What is summarizing?

Allow students to answer and lastly, I will answer the question.

A summary should be shorter than the actual story. It also will tell what is most important about the story. When you summarize, you will have to write in your own words and you will state the big ideas of the passage.

That means you will learn to recognize the main idea of the story and be able to retell those ideas in few sentences or paragraphs.

Procedure:

We will have an in-depth discussion about the story. We will emphasize on important details.

How will we decide which are important?

We will have a flip chart that questions What, Why, When, Where, and How?

The students will answer the questions during the discussion verbally so the teacher will write on the flip chart.

- Explain to students that our goal is to be able to summarize; to do that, we have to figure out what is the main idea and supporting details of Show Way.
- Discuss how we determine important details.

By answering 5 Ws questions: What, Why, When, Where, and How?

- What's the main idea of the book?

The students will be paired together with a copy of Show Way. I will lead the discussion letting them to read and work together to answer the questions shown below. They will take turns to answer them. It is on reading level, as long it is a group discussion.

Using a smart board, there is a list of questions about the book, Show Way. The questions will be given out to each student. We will discuss verbally then answer the question by writing them down. (Scaffolding)

- Why was Soonie sold? To whom? (pg 2)
- How did Soonie feel about being sold? (pg 3)
- Why did Big Mama care for all the children on the plantation? (pg 3)
- What happened in 1863?
- Why did it inspire other slaves? (13)
- What “war” was being fought in the North in 1862? (pg. 17)
- Where is the road that Soonie’s mother mentions? (pg. 18)
- Why do they call their land “home”? (pg 19)
- Why did Caroline and Ann walk in lines? For what purpose? (pg 23)
- What did Grandma Soonie give to them that helped them find courage? (pg 24)
- Who is the mother of Toshi Georgina? (pg. 26)

My own record: (The activity is one of the strategies to give students a purpose for reading, focus students’ attention on what they are to learn, help students to think actively as they read, and encourage students to monitor their comprehension.)

Before summarizing, you have to recognize the main idea and important details in the story.

- Identifying important details in the story which are:
 - It started with Big Mama and it continued by stories and quilt,
 - Soonie’s great-grandma’s story, teaching how to make a quilt,
 - Soonie’s grandma, Mathis May’s story and learning how to sew
 - She was sold as slave and she sewed quilts with different meanings,

- Soonie's mother and Soonie sewed on how they live feeling like Home
 - Soonie called the quilt Show Way
 - Soonie made quilt about her life.
 - Georgiana, born a reader, had children: Caroline and Ann
 - The children lived through segregation.
 - They had quilt keeping them strong
 - Ann had the narrator, she could read and write, she learned that there is a road of life. People have their own roads of their lives.
 - Toshi is our next generation that will pass the stories to next and next.
- (Passing down the generations, different stories but same strength, messages delivered in quilt, and the quilt stands for a person's life experiences should be discussed in the class.)
 - Main idea of the book, which is the quilt in "show way" is "showing the way" of freedom for slaves.
 - Using the worksheet for guidance
 - Was the activity easy or hard? (The question is for me to see if I should use the same teaching strategy again for next time and what level the students are on.)

(MINI LESSON PLAN shown on p. 85.)

I will tell students that doing the discussion together to recognize the important details by answering 5Ws questions is one of the strategies for students to learn a purpose for reading,

focus their attention on what they are to learn, and help them to think actively as they read, and encourage them to monitor their comprehension.

During the discussion, I will point out the important details to keep students focused on the content itself. The important details are mentioned in closure.

Plan for Independent Practice: A [worksheet](#) will be given to the students for practicing skills.

(Fading)

With the same partner, they will work together to apply what we already discussed. With the worksheet, it gives them an idea how to summarize by selecting different events and details about each event.

Based on this book, *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories*
by Ellen Levine

This book has different short stories that shouldn't take so much time for students to read. They will work in pairs to summarize their choice of short story in the book.

(While students work together to fill out the worksheet, I will observe how they proceed and walk around to be prepared to answer any questions in case they need guidance.)

Assessment:

- Worksheet activity
 - The student's work on the worksheet will be analyzed and few mistakes are acceptable.
 - The homework they will do is an important assessment because they do it individually.

The rubric to assess the written summary:

	1- Need Improvement It is not completed or completed with at best effort.	2- Good The completion and efforts are good. Few things are missed.	3-Excellent The completion of work and good effort with full comprehension of the book
Organization (The story is in the correct sequence.)			
Includes five Ws What is the main idea of the book? The important details are included. The applications are used during the classroom. When did it all start?			
The main idea is supported.			

Closure (Wrap-Up):

- We will discuss what we have learned today.

Any questions?

Tomorrow we will focus on the Underground Railroad and will also research on the subject. We will have a fun activity tomorrow.

Homework:

Pick any short book that related to freedom on the shelf and use the same worksheet to help you to write a paragraph. Summarize the story.

Mini Lesson Plan

Introduce Topic: How to use this 5Ws graphic organizer. Teacher models use of the graphic organizer with a document reader. Teacher asks, “We have been learning all about Show Way book. Any of you know how to summarize the story?”

Share example: Teacher shares her copy of the graphic organizer using a document reader. Each space is filled with relevant information.

Who? Characters, people, humans, or talking characters such as animals in the story

- Big Mama
- Soonie’s great-grandma
- Soonie’s grandma
- Soonie’s mother
- Soonie
- Georgiana
- Caroline and Ann
- Toshi

What? What happened in the story? What is the problem?

- Long time ago, African Americans were slaves. The quilt was used to deliver the messages through the next generations of this family.

Where? Any place such as farm, city, or Florida that is included in the story

Different places: home, cities, and countries

When? Past, present, or future or date (April 9, 2012)

The story has the past, present, and future of the whole generation.

Why? The reason how it happened- it can be causes and effect.

The family is strong united and the quilt shows that the family stays strong to the real world with frustrations.

Make sure that you don't miss any important details. If you do, the whole story could be different.

Provide Information: Teacher explains that students will be listening and looking for information about specific details to answer the questions. They will write their own words to shorten the story itself by answering few sentences to each 5ws question.

I will show the answers to each question for Show and Way. We will work together to write our own words to make it a shorter passage. To write in our own words, we should include the main idea and important details that covers the whole idea of the story. We will use 5Ws question answers to make a summarization.

I will read aloud the summarization, and then explain that writing in our words with shorter

passages about another longer story is called summarizing.

Freedom Unit – Wednesday**Unit Goals:**

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of slavery in the United States by preparing (and listening to other) oral (and visual) presentations.

- Students will understand the importance of effectively using oral communication to provide accurate directions to others by establishing an Underground Railroad.

Standards:

Viewing: 4.6 – The student will demonstrate comprehension of information resources to research a topic.

a) Collect information, using the resources of the media center, including online, print, and media resources.

Talking: 4.1 – The student will use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings.

a) Present accurate directions to individuals and small groups.

Lesson Title: Underground Railroad

Performance Objectives:

- Given a variety of sources (internet, online encyclopedia, etc.), the students will gather information about the Underground Railroad answering each of the 6 W's (who, what, when, where, why, how).

- Given a starting point (A) and a destination (B), the students will write and then orally dictate (to another student) a set of seven-ten step directions from A to B successfully one out of two attempts.

Materials:

- Computer/internet (teacher selected/approved sites)
- Informational books (encyclopedia, etc.)
- SmartBoard/white board
- Paper/pencils

Preparation/Introduction:

- Review the KWL chart (specifically referring to the Underground Railroad)
- Today we will:
 - learn more about the Underground Railroad by researching through various sources
 - discuss the importance of the Underground Railroad and how it was accomplished
 - develop our own "Underground Railroad" by giving classmates verbal directions

Procedures:

- Introduction (as stated above) – (5 minutes)
- Research mini-lesson (10 minutes)
- Research (20 minutes)
 - Find the who/what/when/where/why/how of the Underground Railroad
 - Review appropriate internet sites/internet rules (based on school internet policy that students are familiar with)
 - Group students (x students use the computers for 10 minutes while y students read printed materials, then switch)
- Regroup (10 – 15 minutes)
 - Groups/students share the information they found
 - Discussion questions:
 - What is it? Why was it created?
 - Who was it for? Who created it?
 - When was it used?
 - Where did it go?
 - How did it work?
 - What do you think it was like for the slaves who used it?
 - Would you be scared?
 - Etc.
 - Create a note sheet as a class
- Research Wrap-up (5 minutes)
 - How did your research go?

- Was the information easy to find?
- Which do you prefer: internet or books? Why?
- Verbal Directions activity (see application) (20 – 25 minutes)
- Wrap-up (15 minutes)
- Journal using the following questions
 - What is your overall impression of the Underground Railroad?
 - What do you think it would have been like to experience it?
 - What was it like creating your own Underground Railroad?
 - Did you and your partner succeed?

Application: Verbal Directions

- Pretend you are using the Underground Railroad and you want to share the directions with your friends and family. Choose a “safe place” location (provided by the teacher) and develop a set of seven-ten point directions to get from here to there. You will have two opportunities to successfully save your partner. If the first attempt fails, review your directions, modify your language, and try again.
- Write the directions (for yourself), and then verbally give another student the directions to that place one time.
- See if your partner can successfully make it the “safe place”
- Switch!

Assessment:

- Given a variety of sources (internet, online encyclopedia, etc.), the students will gather information about the Underground Railroad answering the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, why/how).

- Students will turn in their notes for evaluation. One point will be given for each correct W question (up to 6 points)

- Given a starting point (A) and a destination (B), the students will write and then orally dictate (to another student) a set of seven-ten step directions from A to B.

- Students' success (or lack thereof) will be recorded in journals

Closure:

- Is there anything you'd like to add to the L column of our KWL chart?

- Research Wrap-up

- How did your research go?

- Was the information easy to find?

- Which do you prefer: internet or books? Why?

-Wrap-up/Journal

- What is your overall impression of the Underground Railroad?

- What do you think it would have been like to experience it?

- What was it like creating your own Underground Railroad?

- Did you and your partner succeed?

- Any questions?

Homework:

- (Optional) practice giving directions verbally to your friends and family at home

Accommodations:

- English support/assistance for KWL (student may dictate to teacher or another student)
- Students who need language support may partner with another student to read information from internet/book sources

Research	1 – relevant	0 – irrelevant
Who		
What		
When		
Where		
Why		
How		

Freedom Unit – Thursday**Unit Goal:**

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of slavery in the United States by preparing (and listening to other) oral (and visual) presentations.

Standards:

Visually Representing: 4.2 The student will make and listen to oral presentations and reports.

- 1) Organize information for clarity.

Lesson Title: All Patched-Up**Performance Objectives:**

Cognitive:

- 4.1 Students will synthesize and then apply what they have learned to create their own “Show Way” quilt patch to be added to a Class Quilt. Each patch will be assessed using a poster checklist and will score at least an 80%.
- 4.2 Each student will write a 1 page paper explaining the significance of their Quilt Patch using proper grammatical structure and will score at least an 80% on the attached “One Page Paper” rubric.
- 4.3 Students will do a short oral presentation where they will explain the connections made in their personal “Show Way” and will score at least an 80% on the Oral Presentation Checklist

Affective:

4.4 Students will demonstrate attentive, respectful behavior during the oral presentations 100% of the time as required by the behavior portion of the Oral Presentation Checklist.

Materials needed:

- a. A copy of the book “Show Way” by Jacqueline Woodson for each student
- b. Woodson Handout
- c. Elmo projector
- e. Crayons, markers, construction paper, and rulers

Mini-Lesson: Drawing an Inference (15 Minutes):

1. Introduce Topic: Drawing an Inference. Drawing (making) an inference involves using what you know to make a guess about, what you don’t know, or reading between the lines. Readers who make inferences use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them figure out what is not directly said, making the text personal and memorable.
2. Sharing Examples: We will discuss situations in which students don’t have all of the information and have to make logical guesses, such as figuring out what someone is trying to say, figuring out what is happening in a movie, or figuring out who the singer is on the radio.
3. Provide Information: I will pull out a backpack I “found” in the hallway. Looking at the items inside, the class will make inferences about the owner and see if that helps us track him/her down.

4. Supervise Practice: I will remove items one at a time to see what can be inferred from the item. (Example items: A bill for a vet-maybe the person has an animal. A brand new bottle of hairspray-maybe it's a woman. A bottle of men's deodorant-maybe it's a man. A "shopping list" with a note saying "Baby, will you please pick me up a bottle of hairspray and some cat food on the way home-proving it may be a guy with a girlfriend who has a cat that he took to the vet.) Ultimately the bag will "belong" to a fellow teacher and will be returned.
5. Reflect on learning: at the end of the lesson the teacher and students will come together to discuss the use of the information collected. We will discuss the inferences we were able to make, and which we were able to substantiate with evidence.

Instructional Activity: Introduction (15 Minutes)

- *Introduction:*
 - I will set out crayons, construction paper, markers, and rulers at the front of the room and collect the previous day's homework.
- - The projector will be set up to display quilt patches from the book "Show Way" and photos and/or real quilts will be hung around the room.
- - I will begin the lecture by passing around one of my grandmother's quilts and the class will attempt to "infer" the symbolism behind the patches.

Instructional Activity: Deciphering Meaning (15 Minutes)

- - We will review some of the more striking patches from the book “Show Way” and see what students can “infer” about their meaning from the photos and text.
- - Discussion questions:
 - What does “show way” mean? How do they tell stories?
 - What do the quilts represent?
 - What could you tell us with a quilt patch?

Application: Designing a personal “Show Way” (25 minutes)

Imagine that you will pass some important history, idea, or information to a future generation without words...using only art and the materials I have in front of you. Design your own personal “Show Way”. Each student will then present a 2-3 minute explanation of their quilt patch to the class.

Closure: (20 minutes)

- Each student will have 2-3 minutes to explain their Show Way.

Assessment:

- Student contributions to the class discussion will be noted on a flip chart.
- - Independent work ability will also be notated.

- - Each student’s “Show Way” will be graded as to how well he/she followed directions and the student’s presentation and paper will be graded separately. (One grade for the presentation of content and one grade for the grammatical structure of the paper.)
- - Students will share their work with the class.

Closure: Students will write a one page paper explaining the meaning of their quilt patch to future generations. (This can be written using either a letter or narrative format.)

Show Way Checklist	
Name: _____	Date: _____
5- excellent 4- very good 3- good 2- needs some improvement 1- let’s work together to improve this one	
<input type="checkbox"/> My Show Way has interesting visuals/illustrations. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand and can explain the meaning behind my Show Way. <input type="checkbox"/> Others will understand the meaning behind my Show Way. <input type="checkbox"/> My Show Way contains some important part of my family’s history, an idea, or information that I want to share with future generations without words...using only art and the materials I have in front of me. <input type="checkbox"/> My Show Way is ready to be shared.	
Comments: _____	

Oral Presentation Checklist

Oral Presentation Checklist	
Name: _____	Date: _____
5- excellent 4- very good 3- good 2- needs some improvement 1- let's work together to improve this one	
<input type="checkbox"/> My presentation is interesting.	
<input type="checkbox"/> My presentation uses language that is appropriate for my audience.	
<input type="checkbox"/> My presentation explains my personal Show Way in a way that is understandable to others.	
<input type="checkbox"/> My pace is comfortable and constant.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I properly utilize my visual aide(s).	
Comments: _____	

<input type="checkbox"/> I demonstrate attentive, respectful behavior during the presentations made by my fellow classmates.	

One Page Paper Rubric

Teacher Name: **Mr. Sammons**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content	Provides content of the highest quality.	Provides high quality content.	You need to review your content to make sure that it applies to the assignment given.	I'm not quite sure where you're going. See me and we'll get you on the right track.
Use of grammar	Provides work of the highest quality.	Provides high quality work.	Provides work that occasionally needs to be checked for accuracy.	Provides work that usually needs to be checked/redone.
Relationship between your Show Way and your interpretation.	I can see you worked very hard to show the relationship between your Show Way and your presentation. Excellent work!	I can see you worked to show the relationship between your Show Way and your presentation. Great work!	I can see some effort to show the relationship between your Show Way and your presentation. In the future let's try a little harder to show the relationship between your explanation and your work.	I do not see the relationship between the text and Journal Prompt. In the future let's try a little harder to show how your explanation applies to your work.

Freedom Unit – Friday

Unit Goals:

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of slavery in the United States by preparing (and listening to other) oral (and visual) presentations.

Standards:

Writing: 4.7 The student will write effective narratives, poems, and explanations.

- 1) Write several related paragraphs on the same topic.

Lesson Title: Fieldtrip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture

Performance Objectives:

- Given any and all exhibits at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the students will select one exhibit piece to write a mini report (minimum ten sentences) about (using the investigation worksheet as an information collection guide).

Materials:

- Worksheet
- Pen/pencil
- School buses
- Parent volunteers
- Sack lunches, etc.

Preparation/Introduction:

- Review the KWL chart

- Is anything in the W column still unanswered? Remember those questions when you're exploring the museum. We will have an opportunity to add to L column upon arriving back at school.

- Explain mini report activity: while at the museum, you will each be responsible for researching one exhibit (drawing, photograph, journal, quilt, etc.). Use the worksheet as a guide to collect information on and analyze your exhibit. As homework, you will write a paragraph or two (minimum ten sentences total) to explain your exhibit and its significance. Feel free to take your own notes on the back of the worksheet and also to use the research process we discussed on Wednesday to find more information at home this weekend.

- All students must have a bus/museum buddy and you must stay together at all times. We will be moving around as a class, but you must always know where your buddy is so no one gets separated.

- We will have a tour guide at the museum s/he will show us around and explain all of the exhibits we come to. Please respect the tour guide, the museum, and all other museum guests. Use indoor voices, keep your hands to yourselves, stay close, follow directions, and pay attention.

Procedures:

- Intro (as stated above) – (10-15 minutes)
- Load buses, enjoy the museum, return!
- Wrap-up (20 minutes)
 - KWL chart: allow students to offer any additions to the L column.
 - Allow students to informally share the information collected during the day.
 - Discuss/reflect on the unit as a whole
 - What was your favorite thing about this week's activities?
 - What was the most surprising thing you learned?
 - What do you think it would have been like to live back then...if you were white?
...if you were black?
 - Any questions about the mini report?

Assessment:

- Given any and all exhibits at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the students will select one exhibit piece to write a mini report (minimum ten sentences) about (using the investigation worksheet as an information collection guide).
 - Students will return their homework on Monday for completion (10 sentences) and content (rubric).

Homework:

- Mini report – use museum note sheet and/or research method at home to gather information on a specific exhibit at the museum. Ten sentences minimum to share findings.

Accommodations:

- English support/assistance for KWL (student may dictate to teacher or another student)

“LEARNING TO LOOK”**STUDENT INVESTIGATION WORKSHEET FOR DOCUMENTS**

Primary Source: An object, document, or firsthand account from the time period under discussion.

Secondary Source: A secondhand object, document, or account created by people who were not part of the past event. These sources are one step removed from an event because they are neither product of the event nor eyewitness reports. Secondary sources may vary widely in their interpretations of an event.

Types of Sources: Drawings, Photographs, Three-dimensional objects, Printed materials, Manuscripts (handwritten or typed material that has never been published), Oral histories (personal recollections or statements from individuals, either tape recorded, videotaped, or in written form)

Name of the document:

As you examine this document, ask yourself these questions:

1. Who wrote or drew this document?
-

2. When and where was it written or drawn?

3. How close was the writer or artist to the event described?

4. Who was the intended audience?

1. Was the writer or artist trying to promote a specific point of view, opinion or bias?

2. Briefly describe and/or sketch the document:

3. List three characteristics that you feel are important to know about the document. Please explain your answer.

On a scale of 1 to 10, where would you rank this document for truth and reliability?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Reliable

Very Reliable

Why?

Resources

<http://www.lesliepreddy.com/yhba/08-09/PictureBook/ShowWay-Duncan.pdf>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/3479/>

http://www.lessonplanet.com/directory_articles/reading_lesson_plans/10_September_2009/128/summary_lesson_plans