

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCES
IN LITERATURE**

GRADES 10-12

THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2099 Pennington Road
Ewing, NJ 08618

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In accordance with The Ewing Public Schools' Policy 2230, Course Guides, this curriculum has been reviewed and found to be in compliance with all policies and all affirmative action criteria.

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Course Description

This guide contains a comprehensive description of the African-American Experiences in Literature elective English course. The sequential study units provide an introduction to and a thorough development of the comprehension of the African-American experience from the early 17th century to modern times.

Students will be exposed to a variety of authors presenting views on the African-American experience. It is hoped that, through exposure to authors whose ideas and values reflected diverse backgrounds, students will appreciate the differences as well as the similarities among all people.

Outside reading, research projects and cooperative learning projects are required. Students will read narrative accounts, read stories, write biographies and compose/ create group projects based on various topics including Harlem Renaissance authors, abolitionists and the Underground Railroad. They will also view supplemental videotapes to support historical chronology, and they will gain an appreciation for the music (i.e., gospel, spirituals) that is a fundamental component of slave narratives and African-American literature.

This course is based on the works of Olaudah Equiano, Benjamin Banneker, Harriet Jacobs, Phillis Wheatley, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, James Weldon Johnson, Toni Morrison, David Walker, Countee Cullen, Nella Larsen, Carter G. Woodson and Nicole Bailey-Williams.

Unit 1: Slave Narratives and Resistance [Pacing: 22 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study provides insight into the Middle Passage, slave sales and day-to-day life on plantations. The big ideas explored throughout this unit of study include, but are not limited to the following: resistance to slavery, slave naming practices on plantations, nutrition among slaves, importance of slave music, distinctions between male and female slaves, distinctions between house and field slaves, and literacy and religion as acts of defiance.

Enduring Understandings:

- Students will distinguish between active and passive resistance to slavery.
- Students will contrast Old World slavery and New World slavery.
- Students will be able to trace the class/color distinctions that were established during slavery, which remain intact during modern times.
- Students will discover the hidden meanings in slave music and other forms of entertainment.
- Students will trace the origins of contemporary 'soul food,' which has its roots in the food served on plantations by slaves to both slave holders and slaves.
- Students will note that the quest for literacy was important for emancipation, both in body and in mind.

Essential Questions:

- What were some of the coping mechanisms used by slaves in order to survive?
- How did African Americans attempt to show their humanity?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Differences in treatment existed on plantations for field slaves and house slaves.
- The history of African American cuisine can be traced back to the times of slavery.
- There are content-specific vocabulary terms that will help one to more thoroughly understand the history of and struggles for African American slaves.
- There was a distinct architecture in many southern homes, both slave quarters and plantation homesteads.
- There was active and passive resistance to slavery by both Quakers and by the slaves themselves.

Acquired Skills:

- Differentiate between slave sales in the Caribbean vs. slave sales in the states.
- Predict patterns of mobility for descendants of field slaves versus those who worked indoors on plantations.
- Reconstruct the escape routes for slaves from southern states seeking freedom.
- List common slave names, tracing the trends through the conservative, hippie and nationalistic eras to modern times.
- Deconstruct slave music, searching for hidden meaning in the music.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Whole group and small group discussion
- Quizzes
- Written responses (i.e., *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*)

Instructional Materials:

- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs
- *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* by Frederick Douglass (required text)
- *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation* (audio tapes and accompanying book)
- Excerpts from David Walker's *Appeal*
- Various articles (about Thomas Jefferson's descendants, etc.) from *American Legacy* magazine
- Various essays (about Olaudah Equiano, Benjamin Banneker, etc.) from *African American Literature* textbook

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Connections can be made between this unit in the course and culinary arts, American History and music courses.

Technology Connections:

- *Unchained Memories* (video)
- *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad* (video)
- *Lest We Forget* by Velma Maia Thomas (interactive, 'pop-up' book)
- *Blood on the Fields* by Wynton Marsalis (music)
- *A Son of Africa* (video)
- *The Colored Museum* by George C. Wolfe (video)
- *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation* (audio tapes and accompanying book)

NOTE: Films will be used to supplement reading material and will not be used to replace reading in this course. The learning goal for using videos will align with CCRA .RL.7 (integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words).

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- Differentiated worksheets and organizers, untimed reading assignments and teacher-generated help with tests will be made available to assist struggling readers and learners.
- Audio recordings and video excerpts of many of the texts read throughout this unit of study can support and supplement the readings, especially for the struggling reader.
- The elements of this and other units are rigorous enough to stimulate gifted learners.

List of Applicable Common Core State Standards for ELA*:

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-4, CCR.R.6-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.2, 4, 9 and 10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 4 and 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1, 2, 4 and 6

*Since this course is offered to students in Grades 9-12, the standards listed are the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that serve as the focus of the ELA standards in all grades.

Benchmark Assessment: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*:

Select a topic from the following list. Then, compose an essay that will be 1½-2 pages in length. The paper must be:

- typed in 12-point font
 - use a standard font (i.e., Helvetica or Times New Roman) and double-spaced
1. There are many similarities and differences in the stories of Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass. These differences include simple things like the frequency of the distribution of rations to their perspectives of slavery from urban and rural areas. Compare and contrast their experiences, pointing out simple and complex differences.
 2. Douglass' fight with Covey is symbolic of a larger issue, his struggle for humanity. Describe the things against which Douglass was fighting and why his fight was so important for the educated and uneducated, blacks and whites, females and males of his day and our day.
 3. Mr. Auld chastises his wife with the words "Give a n---r an inch and he'll take an ell." This is just one of the obstacles Douglass encounters in his quest for education. In our reading, we have seen others struggle for the wisdom that came from the written word. Why was their struggle so important? What have you learned from their thirst for information? Have you, individually and collectively, stayed true to their goal? How? How will you contribute to the causes of Douglass, Linda's 'Uncle Fred,' and Tonyea Stewart's blind Papa Dallas?
 4. Travel is important for Douglass' sense of growth and exposure. How does travel change him? When he is in his 'beast-like stupor', how does lack of travel stifle him while seeing the boats pass on Sundays?
 5. On Page 63, Douglass complains about slaves who think that their masters' greatness is transferable to them. Why do the slaves do this? Today, do we still look to objects or other people to validate our worth? What is the danger in doing so, both for the slaves of Douglass' era and for us in modern times?

Unit 2: Women's Voices [Pacing: 5 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

During this unit of study, students will explore the issue of sexism as it applies to African American women both historically and in modern times. The big idea at the center of this unit focuses on the dilemma that African American women face: Which evil is greater, racism or sexism?

Enduring Understandings:

- An African American woman is the only individual challenged to fight against both racism and sexism.
- There are black feminists who wrote about their struggles related to being both female and African American.
- Questions of identity are enduring and are always evolving; even with these questions, it is important that a woman is able to define herself.

Essential Questions:

- Must African American women choose which 'ism' to fight first?
- Will fighting for gender equity harm African American women's chances of dismantling racism?

Acquired Knowledge:

- There were early black feminists and other African American women who attempted to define themselves, even within the social constructs surrounding them at the time in which they wrote.
- There is a clear connection between the 'isms' faced by early black feminist writers and the 'isms' that women face during the modern day civil rights movement.
- Historically, women faced many trials and encountered many obstacles solely based upon their gender (i.e. inability to own property, voting rights, etc.)

Acquired Skills:

- Identify the challenges faced by African Americans, by women and by African American women and discuss the differences between each group.
- Defend one's reasons for choosing which form of discrimination (racism or sexism) must be tackled first.
- Link issues of negative self-image with regard to race, specifically blackness, to the nurturing or lack of nurturing by members of immediate society (i.e., people with whom we are raised) and extended society (i.e., those with whom we have lesser direct contact).

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Questioning and class discussion throughout the reading
- Self-image project

Instructional Materials:

- Poems by Phyllis Wheatley
- Excerpted essay by Alice Walker from *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*
- Speech by Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?"
- Essays from *Blue Jeans* (about young women's perspective of sexism)
- Article from *Ebony* magazine by Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole (about the impact of video images on young women, specifically young black women)

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- For this unit, students will make connections between this course and their American History courses with relation to topics like the women's suffrage movement.
- Concepts introduced during this unit can relate to the Psychology elective.

Technology Connections:

- ACLU Women's Rights website at <http://www.aclu.org/womens-rights>, which includes historical timelines, links to reliable websites and blogs on issues related to women's rights
- Women's International Center created a website to narrate the history of women's rights at <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>.
- The Women's Leadership in American History at the City University of New York created a website titled Black Suffrage and the Struggle for Civil Rights, which is available at http://www1.cuny.edu/portal_ur/content/womens_leadership/black_suffrage.html.
- Alice Walker reads Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsjdLL3MrKk>.
- There are many oral readings of the works of Wheatley, Walker and Truth available on YouTube.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- Differentiated worksheets and organizers, untimed reading assignments and teacher-generated help with tests will be made available to assist struggling readers and learners.
- Audio recordings and video excerpts of many of the texts read throughout this unit of study can support and supplement the readings, especially for the struggling reader.
- The elements of this and other units are rigorous enough to stimulate gifted learners.

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Women's Voices
Benchmark Assessment: Class Discussion Rubric

| | Needs Improvement 1 point | Approaches Expectation 2 points | Meets/Exceeds Expectations 3 points |
|--|--|---|--|
| Contribution | The student did not participate during discussion. | The student was limited in his/her participation (i.e., one or two comments; only responding when addressed directly). | The student was engaged in the conversation and added, gave or questioned comments offered by classmates in a way that enriched the discussion. |
| Quality of Comments | Comments may have been restatements of points previously mentioned OR the comments added nothing new to the discussion. | Comments were appropriate and reflected some thoughtfulness that may or may not lead to other questions or remarks from classmates. | Comments were timely, appropriate, thoughtful and reflective. The student responded respectfully to the comments of others and provoked questions/comments from the group. |
| Resources or References during Discussion | The student was unable to refer to any text for evidence or support of his/her remarks. | The student clearly completed the required reading and could refer to a text, but his/her comments may have lacked detail or critical insight. | There was a clear reference to a text or texts and the student connected the text(s) to previous learning or readings. |
| Depth of Thought | The student's questions and/or comments did not show very deep original thinking. | Some questions and/or comments showed deep understanding and original, profound thought. | All questions and/or comments showed deep understanding and/or original, profound thought. |
| Active Listening | The student may have drifted in and out of the discussion, listening to some remarks while clearly missing or ignoring others. He/she appeared to be off-task and/or inattentive at times. | The student listened to others most of the time but may have been busy formulating his/her responses rather than listening to the thoughts of others. He/she showed some consistency in responding to other's thoughts. | The student's posture, demeanor and behavior clearly demonstrated respect and attentiveness to others. |

Student's Name: _____

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Total Points Earned: _____ | Grade (Circle One): 15 points = A+ 11 points = C+ 8 points = D+ 14 points = A 10 points = C 7 points = D- 13 points = B 9 points = C- 0-6 points = F 12 points = B- |
|-----------------------------------|--|

Unit 3: The Rise of the Black Middle Class [Pacing: 17 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study provides the basis for comparing and contrasting the lives of slaves with their descendents, sometimes only one generation removed from the institution. The big ideas addressed throughout this unit of study include:

- The importance of education in the rise of the former slaves
- The quest for education that faced people like Booker T. Washington
- The differences between the type of education proposed by Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, Monroe Trotter and others and the type of education proposed by Booker T. Washington
- The founding of Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs)
- The social clubs and civil rights organizations founded by HBCU graduates protecting the rights of African Americans, promoting community service and providing networking tools for them and their children.

Enduring Understandings:

- As early as 1900, there were college-educated, professional African Americans who lived well.
- There were specific reasons that some organizations formed during The Club Movement, although some called the organizations 'elitist'.
- There are distinctive differences between the HBCU college experience and other college experiences, especially as they pertain to the impact that HBCUs have on producing a black professional class and the importance of HBCUs in modern times.

Essential Questions:

- What are the holdovers from slavery that permeated the early founding of African American social organizations?
- Why, where and by whom were Historically Black Colleges and Universities founded?
- What is the role that HBCUs play in educating students today?
- What are the communities like that surround these HBCUs (i.e., Philadelphia)?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Some descendents of slaves, who were able, chose to 'pass'.
- Conflicts existed between the intellectuals (The Talented Tenth) and Washington's manual laborers.
- There was a rationale for the founding and development of the civil rights, social and fraternal organizations.
- There is an academic curriculum and a hidden curriculum presented at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, each equally as important.

Acquired Skills:

- Outline the reasons why the intellectuals were angry with the leaders of the manual labor movement.

- Develop a curriculum of study that would please the leaders of the manual labor movement.
- List the types of careers that African Americans chose after slavery and their formal education.
- Create a debate between two opposing leaders in order to demonstrate the dichotomy that existed between DuBois and Washington.
- Defend the rationale of upwardly mobile African Americans for forming their own societies.
- List the regions in which the HBCUs were founded.
- Discuss the reasons for the founding of HBCUs.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Essay or original poem in the style of “The Debate” focused on Booker T. Washington’s *Up from Slavery*
- Formal assessment focused on the clubs/social organizations that were founded during the era called The Club Movement
- Questioning and discussion throughout the reading

Instructional Materials:

- “The Debate” by Dudley Randall (poem summarizing the stances of Booker T. Washington vs. W.E.B. DuBois (et. al.)
- *American Legacy Magazine*—Article about Monroe Trotter
- Booker T. Washington’s *Up from Slavery*
- Nella Larsen’s *Passing*
- Informational texts about W.E.B. DuBois
- Kaylyn Johnson’s *The BAP Handbook*
- Lawrence Otis Graham’s *Our Kind of People*
- Lawrence C. Ross’s *The Divine Nine*
- Articles from the annual September issue of *Ebony Magazine* in which the HBCUs are highlighted
- Up the Hill (annual 'yearbook' from Jack and Jill, a social organization)

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- For this unit, students will make connections between this course and their American History courses with relation to topics like Reconstruction, Plessy vs. Ferguson and Juneteenth.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- Differentiated worksheets and organizers, untimed reading assignments and teacher-generated help with tests will be made available to assist struggling readers and learners.
- The elements of this and other units are rigorous enough to stimulate gifted learners.

Technology Connections:

- *Imitation of Life* (movie)
- *Up from Slavery* (Washington) is available on Google Books. A full text is also available online at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/WasSlav.html> (University of Virginia).
- “Jefferson’s Blood” (video) and the concept of passing is available online at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/diversity/jefferson/>.
- The White House List of HBCUs is available online at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/whhbcu/edlite-list.html>.

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Benchmark Assessment: Booker T. Washington’s *Up from Slavery*:

DIRECTIONS: Select one of the four writing assignments below to complete as a reflection to Washington’s *Up from Slavery*.

1. Using what you know about the poetic debate between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, develop your own “Debate” poem between two opposing leaders. Make sure that you include two paragraphs (one per person) that detail the philosophies of the leaders. Your poem should be at least three (3) stanzas with a minimum of six (6) lines per stanza.
2. Imagine that you are one of Washington’s critics, perhaps even DuBois. Write a letter to him detailing your opposition to him and his philosophies. Your response can include the objections voiced by the African American media after the speech at the ATL expo. Compose a thorough five-paragraph essay complete with a thesis statement, an introduction and a conclusion.
3. What is meant by the following quote by Washington: “No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem.”

How does this quote follow with Washington’s philosophy of education that many of the HBCUs promoted in their early days? Have other groups of people embraced this philosophy? If so, what has been the result?
4. Are Washington’s philosophies (educational, financial, social, self-help such as “cast down your buckets...”) relevant for African Americans in today’s society?

Unit 4: Harlem Renaissance [Pacing: 10 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit of study exposes students to the writings of people during the second wave of African American literature, when writers expressed their ideas including, but limited to, passing, revolution, war and day-to-day life in America. The big ideas covered throughout this unit of study include:

- The Great Migration and its impact on literature
- Early writers who helped to lay the foundation for the acceptance of African American literature
- Common themes presented by Harlem Renaissance writers
- Educational accomplishments of the Harlem Renaissance writers
- The compromises made by some of the early writers

Enduring Understandings:

- Many Harlem Renaissance writers are still studied for their literary and academic contributions.
- Harlem served as a cultural Mecca for Americans during the 1920s and 1930s.
- The NAACP played in a major role in the cultivation of Harlem Renaissance writers through its *Crisis* magazine.

Essential Questions:

- What were common themes or characteristics found in Harlem Renaissance works of literature?
- Is an African American artist ever able to be viewed as simply 'an artist'?
- Is it necessary for African American artists to always put 'the best foot forward'?
- What are the holdovers from slavery that permeated the entry into supper clubs/establishments like The Savoy and The Cotton Club?

Acquired Knowledge:

- There were explicit reasons for the Great Migration and this migration from South to North impacted all aspects of American life including literature.
- Although, Paul Laurence Dunbar was one of the earliest celebrated authors, he was conflicted because of the work that was accepted versus the work that was expected from him.
- Even in protest, Claude McKay wrote in the standard sonnet format.
- Jessie Redmon Fauset was not only an author, but also the gatekeeper for entrée to the Harlem literary arena as the literary editor for *Crisis* magazine.
- As an attorney, educator, ambassador and writer, James Weldon Johnson was a Renaissance man who penned a song that is still sung today.
- Countee Cullen called on Harlem Renaissance authors to be concerned with human affairs, not just African American affairs.
- Langston Hughes served as a literary godfather during and after the Harlem Renaissance.

- Anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston valued the oral traditions of African Americans and transcribed their wordplay and folktales into the written format for generations to enjoy.
- Writers such as Claude McKay and Countee Cullen were known for their protest poetry.

Acquired Skills:

- Explain how the Great Migration impacted the world of literature.
- Identify and analyze the writing style and voice of several Harlem Renaissance writers.
- Evaluate how upbringing, circumstances and education influence the writings of Harlem Renaissance authors.
- Describe common themes across literary works from myriad Harlem Renaissance writers.
- Create original folktales following the exemplars of Renaissance writers.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Create original folktales
- Tests and quizzes
- Whole group and small group discussion
- Formal assessment focused on Nella Larsen's *Passing*

Instructional Materials:

- *Passing* by Nella Larsen
- The works of Renaissance writers such as McKay, Fauset, Johnson, Cullen, Hughes, Dunbar, Larsen and Hurston
- *Crossing the Danger Water: Three Hundred Years of African American Writing*, edited by Deirdre Mullane
- *American Legacy* magazine
- Various essays from *African American Literature* textbook (Holt Rinehart Winston)
- *Black Voices*, edited by Abraham Chapman

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Connections can be made between this unit American History, specifically the study of 1920s and 1930s America
- Connections can be made to the study of mythology

Technology Connections:

- *Zora Is My Name* (video)
- PBS biographical video of Zora Neale Hurston available online at <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/tag/zora-neale-hurston/>
- The Library of Congress Guide to the Harlem Renaissance can be accessed online at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/harlem/harlem.html>. Thousands of photos, videos and audio clips can be accessed via this site.
- There are many interpretations of Harlem Renaissance works available on YouTube.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- This unit of study lends itself to support using audio and video recordings.
- The works of art produced during the Harlem Renaissance will help the visual learner to better understand the time period.
- Differentiated worksheets and organizers, untimed reading assignments and teacher-generated help with tests will be made available to assist struggling readers and learners.
- The elements of this and other units are rigorous enough to stimulate gifted learners.

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- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1, 2, 4 and 6

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Benchmark Assessment: Harlem Renaissance:

In Alain Locke's essay "The New Negro" (1925), he explains a shift in society during the Harlem Renaissance, "a Negro...is no longer apologetic for blackness but...takes a new pride in a racial identity and heritage."

- Analyze this quote connecting to the experiences of both Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield from Nella Larsen's *Passing*. What would each character say or how would each feel about Locke's statement?
- Connect this quote to one other work read during this unit of study.

Use evidence from all textual works as support.

Unit 5: Blacks in Business [Pacing: 10 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

This unit is important because it introduces the students to both historical and contemporary African American entrepreneurs. Time will also be spent identifying the mindset that steers so many away from entrepreneurialism. The big ideas explored in this unit of study include the following:

- Early African American entrepreneurs encountered many roadblocks and obstacles, including but not limited to issues related to racism.
- Some popular types of businesses that African American historically entered differ from the popular business realms entered today.
- Modern day African American entrepreneurs continue to encounter obstacles and must work to overcome them to achieve success in professional environments.

Enduring Understandings:

- Early African American entrepreneurs became successful following Booker T. Washington's theory of "casting their buckets" where they stood.
- Myriad contemporary young entrepreneurs brought diversity to business.
- There is a common fear of entrepreneurship among many contemporary African Americans, as they were historically steered away from professional fields thus reinforcing their dependence on others for their very survival.

Essential Questions:

- How has history influenced the fear that many African Americans have of entering the business arena and professional areas of study?
- What contributions have African Americans made to the field of business?
- Are there businesses in which African Americans traditionally can (and do) thrive?

Acquired Knowledge:

- AG Gaston was a multi-millionaire who began his empire with several smaller businesses.
- There are common investment terms that must be understood and applied for one to be successful as an entrepreneur.
- There are required educational steps that must be pursued to be qualified to work within certain professions.

Acquired Skills:

- Explain the history and development of African American entrepreneurship in the United States.
- Define and apply common business terms as they relate to entrepreneurship.
- Describe the importance that education plays, often targeted or specific education, in the success or failure of an individual's quest for success in the world of work.

- Create a rough business plan in which a need is researched and plans are developed, indicating how the need can be met.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Research Project – research business giants; prepare and present an oral report (complete with a visual aid) about the entrepreneur
- Whole group and small group discussion

Instructional Materials:

- Carter G. Woodson's *The Mis-Education of the Negro*
- *Jet* magazine
- *Black Enterprise* magazine (various articles)
- Guest speakers (i.e., a woman who operates two successful daycare centers, a woman who owns a Philadelphia-area Rita's Water Ice, a woman who owns a hair salon and real estate, a woman who is a corporate executive at Unisys)

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Connections can be made between the lessons learned in this unit and those that serve as the focus for business courses taught in the high school.

Technology Connections:

- PowerPoint projects created by students as visual aids
- The text from Washington's 1895 Atlanta Compromise Speech, which included the famous "Cast Down Your Buckets" metaphor, is available online at <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/39/>.
- Several online sources such as Black Enterprise (www.blackenterprise.com/) provide information about successful African American entrepreneurs from the modern day.
- Several Google videos are available by simply typing a Google video search for Successful Black Entrepreneurs. The appropriateness of these videos would have to be determined before they could be used in the classroom.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- Research topics can be differentiated based not only upon student interest, but also based upon the reading levels and readability of the informational texts available.
- Differentiated graphic organizers will help to meet individual student's needs during the reading and researching process.

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Benchmark Assessment - Expository Essay: Blacks in Business:

Carter G. Woodson, the author of *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, proposed the idea that African Americans had been steered away from business ownership as a means of wealth and advancement. Why might one argue that African American entrepreneurship benefits African Americans in particular and America as a whole?

Analyze this statement using an example from literature, history, science, film or your own personal experience or observation.

Unit 6: Contemporary Literature [Pacing: 15 Days]

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of study, students will explore popular concepts of beauty as they are presented in literature across time. They will also discuss how the concept of beauty has developed over time, specifically focusing on the relationship between the idea of 'beauty' and the social standing and/or understanding of African Americans. The big ideas explored in this unit include the following:

- Much of the ideology of what is 'beautiful' stems from plantation settings.
- There are international and intercultural parallels to what African Americans experience in terms of their historical class structure being based on skin color.

Enduring Understandings:

- Many argue that for true beauty to exist, self-acceptance must be supreme.
- The common standards of African American beauty, which were taught during slavery, still have holdovers that are manifest in our modern times
- The concept of 'good hair' vs. 'bad hair', as well as notion of lighter skin holding superior status, is antithetical to self-love.

Essential Questions:

- Why have notions of beauty persisted for so long?
- How have people fought against the ideological definition of 'beauty'?
- Have African Americans started to move beyond the commonly accepted definition of what is beautiful?
- What is necessary or helpful in the quest toward self-love?

Acquired Knowledge:

- 'Beauty' is defined differently based upon one's experience, knowledge and understanding.
- The common standards of African American beauty can be traced to the times of slavery.
- Prior to the 1960s/1970s 'Black is Beautiful' movement, there was a centuries-old acceptance of the inferiority of color.

Acquired Skills:

- Analyze and explain the origins of contemporary ideas of beauty as they are presented in various works of literature.
- Trace changes in the definition of beauty and connect concepts to societal issues or constructs over time.

Benchmark or Major Assessments:

- Tests and quizzes
- Whole group and small group discussion

Instructional Materials:

- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *A Little Piece of Sky* by Nicole Bailey-Williams
- *Essence* magazine

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Connections can be made between this unit, American History and World History.

Technology Connections:

- *Luminarium: Anthology of English Literature* provides essays, articles and miscellaneous references for Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* online at <http://www.luminarium.org/contemporary/tonimorrison/bluest.htm>.
- The full text of Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* is available for download by searching by title and PDF.
- Several YouTube videos related to Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* are online.

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners:

- There are many audio and video recordings of one of this unit's required texts which can be used to supplement instruction.
- The author of *A Little Piece of Sky* is a teacher in the EHS English Department, so she should be utilized as a reference to provide support, accommodations and/or extensions for learners.
- Differentiated worksheets and organizers, untimed reading assignments and teacher-generated help with tests will be made available to assist struggling readers and learners.

List of Applicable Common Core State Standards for ELA*:

- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Reading CCR.R.1-4, CCR.R.6-10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Writing CCR.W.2, 4, 9 and 10
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening CCR.SL.1, 4 and 6
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards: Language CCR.L.1, 2, 4 and 6

*Since this course is offered to students in Grades 9-12, the standards listed are the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that serve as the focus of the ELA standards in all grades.

Benchmark Assessment: Contemporary Literature – *A Little Piece of Sky*:

Author Nicole Bailey-Williams incorporates many symbolic images and other literary devices to add depth to the novel *A Little Piece of Sky*. Choose one image from each column in the table below (4 total), extrapolate evidence from the text and describe each symbol's significance to the story.

| Names | Colors | Items | Events |
|---|---------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Song Byrd Caramia Freeman Sojourn Oedipus | Red Azul | Bass (instrument) Vanilla cyclone Turquoise bracelet Table setting for three | Surrendering the weave Looking up |

| Symbol | Specific Example from the Text | Description of Its Significance |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name _____ | | |
| Color _____ | | |
| Item _____ | | |
| Event _____ | | |