

Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories

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Overview

“Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories” will focus on actively engaging males; specifically, African American males in student-centered group dialogue that will build on critical thinking skills using short stories. This is in an effort to not only enrich our African American male students’ learning experiences by exposing them to stories and the testimonies of others to empower them with better coping skills but also to get our young men thinking more critically about issues that affect them as urban center dwellers. Studies have shown that there is a clear connection between critical thinking and proper decision making. This unit will incorporate primarily short stories, short films and conscious music that attempt to address some of the many issues, trials and tribulations that our young men consistently face in their daily struggle to survive in their present environments. Conscious rap music is chosen because it will provide some type of message to the listener. Music is always a good way to aid in conveying a message in a lesson. Such concerns include the more visible issues like: the sale and use of narcotics, gun violence, teenage pregnancy and promiscuity, the high school dropout versus the high school graduate, unemployment, and escaping poverty. Other subliminal, but more pertinent issues that these stories will attempt to engage our young men in are the concept of manhood and growing into it, economic empowerment, spiritual enrichment as well as finding their own identity in communities where peer pressure carries some significant weight and affects their decision making abilities. The hope is to have our young men draw on various written, visual and audio perspectives as they relate to these personal and societal issues and gather additional analytical insight that can be applied to everyday use.

Rationale

The primary goal is to expose young American males of African descent to literature, more specifically short stories, written by African American writers that discuss everyday issues prevalent in black communities across the United States. African American males are the focus of this curriculum unit because not all, but a large portion of urban African American males are facing a crisis. These young men in crisis are identified by Jewelle Taylor Gibbs in her book, *Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species as* "males in the 15-24-year-old age group who live predominantly in urban inner-city neighborhoods but can be found in rural areas,

working-class suburbs and small towns all over America."¹ This particular group is at serious risk. In *"The Myth of Male Power"*, Warren Farrell admits that "the black man is sometimes called an endangered species but receives little of the protection an endangered species is normally accorded."² This may cause their situation to become bleaker. They are the students generally labeled as the most challenging to teach in the school environment. They are the youth shunned by society. Taylor Gibbs goes on to state that "labels are powerful clues to the ways in which groups are perceived, valued, and treated, but labels cannot convey the feelings of frustration, humiliation, and anger of these black youth who experience daily doses of failure, rejection, and discrimination."³ We see this portrayed in their rebellious behaviors throughout society. The African American male youth is said to be and labeled a problem academically and behaviorally, thereby stereotyping him a difficult student to teach and looked upon as a menace in society. Outside of the school environment, our African American males are also facing many societal challenges. These challenges affect their performance and behaviors in the academic environment, their capability to sometimes conform to and function properly in society and their ability to make sound life decisions. Far too many young African American males suffer unnecessary difficulty as a result of their inability to cope with adversity and make decisions that will have a positive effect on their lives.

Clinical psychologist and scholar, Taylor Gibbs also writes that "...young black males in contemporary American society...have been miseducated by the educational system, mishandled by the criminal justice system, mislabeled by the mental health system and mistreated by the social welfare system. All of the major institutions of American society have failed to respond appropriately and effectively to their multiple needs and problems. As a result, they have become...rejects of our affluent society and misfits in their own communities."⁴ Littles, Bowers and Gilmer state in *Why We Can't Wait: A Case for Philanthropic Action: Opportunities for Improving Life Outcomes for African American Males* that "with respect to health, education, employment, income, and overall well-being, all of the most reliable data consistently indicate that Black males constitute a segment of the population that is distinguished by hardships, disadvantages, and vulnerability."⁵

Objectives

The objective of the *"Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories"* curriculum unit is to provide educators with a supplemental resource when teaching African American males. This unit may be utilized not only within the school district classroom setting, but also in an after school program that may provide enrichment in the core curriculum (to the same school district students) as well as an all boys program specifically targeted to meet the needs of young males.

¹ Taylor Gibbs, Jewelle, Editor, 1988. *Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species*. Westport: Auburn House.

² Farrell, Warren, 1993. *The Myth of Male Power*. New York: The Berkley Publishing Group.

³ Taylor Gibbs, page 2

⁴ Ibid, page 2

⁵ Littles, M., Bowers, R., and Gilmer, M., 2007. *Why We Can't Wait: A Case for Philanthropic Action: Opportunities for Improving Life Outcomes For African American Males*. New York: Ford Foundation.

The unit focuses on short stories because many of them are able to compact a significant amount of information and issues into an interesting story using a brief amount of text while not being too long to lose the reader's attention. Short stories are also very useful when there is only a small time frame in which to work.

This unit simply seeks to achieve literary exposure and author biographical review. Many of our urban school young males of African descent have not been exposed to literature written about and for them. The biographical review will be helpful in teaching students about African American writers and can be used to build background knowledge. Knowing about the authors can sometimes explain their written content. At the same time, this literary exposure will allow the instructor to build the student's literary skills using the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for English Language Arts along with the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchor Content Standards and Eligible Content. The student activities will primarily involve dialogue and discussion and use of graphic organizers to help with content comprehension. The Academic Standards for English Language Arts which address each grade level will allow the instructor to focus on academic standard 1.3, Reading Literature, where students will be able to read and respond to works of literature with emphasis on comprehension making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence. Six standards under the Reading Literature umbrella will be addressed. They include:

1. **CC.1.3.9-10.A:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
2. **CC.1.3.9-10.B:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences and conclusions based on an author's explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject.
3. **CC.1.3.9-10.C:** Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
4. **CC.1.3.9-10.F:** Analyze how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.
5. **CC.1.3.9-10.G:** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two (2) different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
6. **CC.1.3.9-10.H:** Analyze how an author draws on and transform themes, topics, character types, and/or other text elements from source material in specific work.⁶

Another area of focus will be on academic standard 1.5, Speaking and Listening of the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Students will be able to present appropriately in formal as well as informal speaking situations, listen critically and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions. The two (2) standards of primary focus are:

1. **CC.1.5.9-10.A:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.....building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

⁶ Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Core Curriculum English Language Arts
http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA_CC_Standards_6-12_ELA.pdf

2. **CC.1.5.9-10.D:** Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning; ensure that the presentation is appropriate to purpose, audience and task.⁷

The Assessment Anchors only address certain grade levels (third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and eleventh). For purposes of implementing this unit, the Assessment Anchors for grade eleven will be used. Usage of these Anchors can be modified based on the student's academic level of performance. The following anchors will be looked at to address specific reading skills and comprehension before, during and after the reading process:

1. **R11.A.1.1.1:** Identify and apply the meaning of vocabulary.
1. **R11.A.1.3.1:** Make inferences, draw conclusions based on information from text.
1. **R11.A.1.3.2:** Cite evidence from the text to support generalizations.
1. **R11.A.1.4.1:** Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.
1. **R11.A.1.5.1:** Summarize the key details and events of a fictional text as a whole.
1. **R11.B.1.1.1:** Interpret, compare, describe, analyze, and/or evaluate character actions, motives, dialogue, emotions/feelings, traits, and relationships among characters, the setting and elements of the plot within fiction.
1. **R11.B.1.1.1:** Interpret, compare, describe, analyze, and/or evaluate the relationships among theme, tone, style and mood, the use of symbolism within fiction.
1. **R11.B.1.2.1:** Interpret, compare, describe, analyze, and/or evaluate connections between texts.⁸

The short stories that the "*Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories*" unit will incorporate to achieve the aforementioned literary skills will include a few stories from Richard Wright's *Eight Men*. The first story to be used from this book is "*The Man Who Was Almost A Man*". "*The Man Who Was Almost A Man*" short story focuses on Dave, a seventeen year old male who not only wants to come into his own as man, but also to receive the respect of others as a man. Dave manipulates and deceives his mother, lies to both parents about the firearm and then runs away from the problems he has created only to have his family clean up the mess. This story also slightly touches on gun violence, although not to the extent that our youth today experience it. However, it shows that Dave believed that having possession of a gun would earn him respect, much like how our young men today think when faced with a challenge. This story will engage the young men in dialogue that addresses questions surrounding what it takes to gain the respect of others, what is manhood and how does a boy become a man?

"*Big Black Good Man*" by Richard Wright speaks directly to how our outward appearances help to create an impression of us that others will use to pass judgment on us regardless of who we really are. Irrespective of race and to some degree class, many of our young men wear the sagging pants revealing their undergarments as a fashion statement. Many young men are not

⁷ Ibid, page 31

⁸ Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/Grade_11_Reading_Assessment_Anchors_and_Eligible_Content.pdf

consciously aware of the judgments others are passing on them simply based on how they look. In this short story, Olaf, the antagonist of the story, seems to be very afraid of the black male whom is never mentioned by name in the story because Richard Wright wants the reader to remain focused on him being very large in stature and extremely dark in color. Unbeknownst to Olaf, this man is a loving, caring and gentle man. His appearance does not speak to the person he really is. Olaf does not realize this until the absolute very end of the story because he is so focused on the man's appearance that he never attempted to learn who the black man was on the inside. I would like to juxtapose this story with how our young men of today dress with little regard for how they are seen and judged by others despite who they may be as an individual. For some of our young men, wearing the sagging pants is a fashion statement; some argue that it is a matter of comfort while others state that they wear their clothing is symbolic of an act of rebellion. They are angry and upset about their position in society and are saying to the world, "Kiss my o\$\$!" This story will open the group dialogue to having the young men discuss why so many of them are angry, what led to such anger and what can be done to help them out of this state. Reading and discussing this story will not solve the problems of these young men at that moment. However, it will open the door to dialogue which, in turn, may lead to some resolutions.

The short stories of author Edward P. Jones will be applied quite a bite in this unit because his book of short stories, Lost in the City, is set in urban Washington, D.C. that speaks specifically to young African American men. The issues in his short stories are ubiquitous today and young African American males living in the inner-city of Philadelphia may be able to make a real life connection with them. Edward P. Jones' "*Young Lions*" deals with youth criminality. Caesar, the main character, deals with trying to obtain money and power within the confines of his own community using strong arm robbery and stealing as the means to achieve such goals. The young men in this short story were seeking to gain some sort of control over their situation and the environment they existed in. Caesar attempted to control his girlfriend, Carol, through the use of force, by recruiting her in his criminal schemes. He needed her because he wanted to commit a robbery without the use of a gun. His plan is successful, but this experience opens Carol's eyes and she sees Caesar for the person he truly is. This story, although violent in the nature of the content, has been chosen to open the door to discussions about an embedded issue: negative relationships. Despite really knowing who the people we associate ourselves with are, we continue in relationships that are detrimental to our own lives. Is it peer pressure? Is it love? Is it an unwilling to let go out of fear? This story can lead the reader into a dialogue that may facilitate some understanding of why people make decisions to involve others into their lives that negatively affect their own.

"*The Store*" also by Jones delves into the relationship between a young man and his deceased father. It appears to be a coming of age story where the young must decide where he will fit into the working world. He seeks to come into his own and he does despite the influence of his father. "*The Store*" is a short story that will allow young men to think about how their father's presence, or lack thereof, has affected their lives. Some young men go into adult manhood with father issues and they do not realize the negative or positive affect that their relationship may have on their current situation.

In *“His Mother’s House”* by Jones, Santiago is a young drug dealer. The income he gains from his lifestyle allows him to be the breadwinner for his entire family. His mother, Joyce, understands that what he does is wrong, but turns a blind eye because she is the major benefactor of all of his wrongdoing. All of her son’s wrongdoing, eventually, turns up at her front door and she is left to clean up the mess he has made. The climax is reached when Santiago kills his childhood friend, Humphrey as a result of the power Santiago has earned in the drug dealing community. *“His Mother’s House”* can be taught in collaboration with the rap song *“Tony’s Story”* by Meek Mill, a South Philadelphia native. *“Tony’s Story”* talks about how two (2) young urbanites who are not only friends, but also business partners in the drug game come to turn on one another only to have one friend kill the other. This storyline also guides the reader to an issue that has become the standard in some poor and disadvantaged neighborhoods across America. There are many single mothers struggling to raise families with meager means who have come to accept that their sons are involved in drug dealing. They justify the action of their sons as a means to an end. The act is illegal, the son may be incarcerated or even killed, but they are providing for the family. The dialogue here will be focused around why is this acceptable and seen as the only means to providing for a family. Students can shed some light on why the consequences of partaking in this type of lifestyle do not seem to outweigh what is viewed as the positive benefits of being part of the game.

“Cordelia the Crude” by Wallace Thurman focuses on the promiscuous characteristics of youth. Although written during the Harlem Renaissance era, the theme that runs through this short story is very prevalent today. This story also deals with the ways in which young men look at young women, make judgments of them and then place labels on them. Cordelia is a rebellious teenage girl forced to leave behind all that she is familiar with and migrate to the North from the South. Her promiscuous behavior allowed a young man to believe Cordelia to be a lady of the night and pay her for her services. It was the payment from the young man that *led* her into a life of prostitution. The objective for using this short story is to provide the young men with a basis for labeling another. Just as they are labeled for how they look, they too label others based on appearances as well as actions.

“Three Men” by Ernest J. Gaines gives a voice to those who believe that they have none. Many young African American males feel that they too have no voice and that what they believe does not matter. Gaines uses the jail cell to create a dialogue between three (3) men. The unit will use this story to engage the young men into expressing their feelings about incarceration versus freedom and how incarceration takes one's basic freedoms away such as their voice.

“Tell Martha Not to Moan” by Sherley Ann Williams involves a young unwed girl still contently living at home with her mother. This particular storyline will give the youth an opportunity to discuss teenage pregnancy, unwed mothers and the prevalence of many young mothers that have several "baby daddies" and seem to be content living at home continuing this cycle of poverty. This story can open up the discussion to how this kind of situation can affect them as young men who may become involved with such a young lady. How would they feel about this type of female? Could they get into a serious relationship with a female with multiple "baby daddies"? Are *they* one of the multiple "baby daddies" and how does this ultimately affect the dynamics of family and the family unit?

To give students other representations of short stories, film and conscious music will also be used. *"Mama Africa: Growing Up Urban"* narrated by Queen Latifah is a trilogy of short films that deal with topics such as unplanned pregnancy and unwed mothers, incarceration and post-incarceration, religion, and the desire to escape extreme poverty as well as how poor decision making usually bring about negative results. Each short film is set in urban Africa: Namibia, Nigeria and South Africa. The objective in introducing foreign short films is to give students exposure to stories as told by other urban youth such as themselves that have the same experiences in life. Additionally, students can utilize their skills of comparison and contrast to describe the similarities and differences of their circumstances. *"Uno's World"* directed by Bridget Pickering, deals with unplanned pregnancy, unwed motherhood and the lengths a female will go through to reach out to the disinterested father of their child. Uno is a young girl who lives with her mother and becomes pregnant as a result of her inexperience. She goes to great extremes to get the father of her child to simply acknowledge the child. This film can be shown in conjunction with the reading of the short story, *"Tell Martha Not to Moan"* because this story tells the experience of a young unwed girl who also lives with her mother and is having her second child despite being a single parent still living at home. The short film *"Hang Time,"* directed by Ngozi Onwurah, speaks to how poverty will create very desperate moments for many of our youth. These desperate moments, in turn, result in poor decision making and irreversible life-changing outcomes. *"Raya"* is a short story directed by South African director Zulfa Otto-Sallies. Raya is recently released from prison. Although she attempts to erase her negative past, she is unsuccessful. She defies her religious mother, gets involved in more trouble as a result of this rebelliousness and has to turn again to her mother to help her flee for her safety. Each of these stories reveals an urban tale that inner-city youth may be able to relate to.

The music that will be incorporated in the unit will include music from artists that talk about the real-life issues that youth today actually experience. A few of the songs will include *"Renegade"* by Jay-Z featuring Eminem, *"The Corner"* by Common, *"Tony's Story"* by Meek Mill and *"American Terrorists"* by Lupe Fiasco, to name a few. These artists speak directly to the youth with social commentary as well as rebellious lyrics. Consequently, each song offers a valuable message. Additional songs can be added as the implementation of the unit progresses.

Strategies

Various academic strategies will be used to achieve the above-referenced objectives. These strategies include the usage of biographies to enhance background knowledge, Before, During and After Reading Strategy, chunked assignments as well as primary source photos/images to augment comprehension through visuals. Richard Wright and Edward P. Jones' collection of short stories will be used to begin the short story series because all of their short stories involve young as well as slightly older African American males. The young men are likely to better understand the text and may be able to readily make a real life connection to their works of fiction. Using the elements of a short story will be the basis for reading each of the short stories so that a foundation can be laid for later topic discussions. Presently, Bartram utilizes the Seven (7) Step Lesson Plan teaching strategy. This teaching strategy takes students through the following as it relates to a particular subject matter:

- **Objective:** This component states what the teacher's lesson plans will have the

student achieve. What knowledge will the student obtain from this lesson?

- **Do Now:** This is the warm-up, the precursor to the lesson. Typically, it relates to the lesson currently being taught or a review of what has already been taught.
- **Direct Instruction:** The teacher is directly involved in administering instruction of the subject matter. Students are not as engaged during this portion of the lesson. Students follow the teacher's lead using listening and note taking skills.
- **Guided Practice:** Students become more involved in the lesson with guided practice. This section demands that the teacher model for the student the lesson that is being taught.
- **Independent Practice:** Students work among themselves for this piece of the lesson. They must incorporate the knowledge acquired from the *Do Now*, *Guided Practice* and *Direct Instruction* and apply it here, attesting to their understanding of the lesson.
- **Closure:** This section of the lesson plan serves as the wrap-up. Students are given a driving question of the lesson's topic that test the student's mastery of the topic taught. This is the pre-assessment to the mastery assessment. This section notifies the teacher if she needs to re-teach this subject matter.
- **Exit Ticket:** Students give a brief summary of what knowledge they have acquired using a graphic organizer, summary sheet, and/or brief pre-assessment. This section also notifies the teacher if she needs to re-teach this subject matter.

Lesson Extension

- **Homework:** This is an extension of the subject matter or topic taught in the lesson. Students review and practice the lesson at home to master the skill previously taught. Review of the lesson extension/ homework can also serve as the *Do Now* the following day.

The Seven (7) Step Lesson Plan format will be utilized in this curriculum unit to remain consistent with the School District of Philadelphia's (SDP) implementation of classroom lessons. Also, this is a plan that many SDP students are aware of and can use without difficulty. This unit will rely heavily upon the usages of graphic organizers and primary source visuals because the goal is to build dialogue and discussion skills among the young men. Verbal expression is therapeutic. The graphic organizers will aid them in building background knowledge, organizing

their thoughts and serve as a visual. Other activities can be added as implementation of the unit progresses.

Classroom Activities

The curriculum unit should be taught over a nine (9) week period using eight (8) short stories and a variety of songs and short films. The stories provided may be used or others may be added to address the goals of your student population. Although the primary aim is to implement the unit with a focus on dialogue and discussion to enhance therapeutic learning, graphic organizers will be used for teaching character analysis, understanding setting, plot, main idea, supporting details and other elements of the short story. Brief writing exercises will be included to have students summarize their comprehension of the text.

Lesson 1

Introduce the elements of a short story. Review in detail the components and their definitions; the *Plot, Character, Conflict, Theme and Setting*. Use simple stories that young people have already been familiarized with, such as "*Anansi the Spider*" for them to quickly grasp the concept. Using graphic organizers, review each component. Complete the same process for the components of the plot.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Monday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Elements of a Short Story. Components of the Plot of a Short Story
Objectives:	<p>S.W.B.A.T describe the basic elements of a short story using a graphic organizer for each component: <i>Plot, Character, Conflict, Theme and Setting</i></p> <p>S.W.B.A.T describe the basic components of plot of a short story.</p>
Instructional Strategies:	graphic organizer, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: Answer one of the two (2) questions: What are the basic elements of a short story? What are the basic components of a stories' plot?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Introduce the elements of a short story. Introduce the vocabulary then read "<i>Bru Rabbit</i>" folktale. Introduce the components of the plot of a short story then read "<i>Spider and the Tortoise.</i>" Vocabulary: <i>plot, character, conflict, theme, setting, exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion.</i></p> <p>Guided Practice: Model the elements of a short story and the components of plot using "<i>Bru Rabbit.</i>" Highlight important points of the story. Jot down notes using a graphic organizer and a plot diagram.</p> <p>Independent Practice: Complete the elements of a short story and the components of plot using a graphic organizer for "<i>Spider and the Tortoise.</i>"</p>

	<p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W's</p> <p>Closure: Summarize each element of the short story explaining its importance to the short story.</p> <p>Exit Ticket: How are the elements of the short story and the components of the plot similar and different?</p> <p>Homework: Complete the elements of a short story for “<i>John Henry: A Steel-Driving Man.</i>” Review the vocabulary creating a sentence for each word.</p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	Copy of folktales “ <i>Bruh Rabbit,</i> ” “ <i>Spider and the Tortoise</i> ” and “ <i>John Henry: A Steel-Driving Man</i> ” and graphic organizers
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 2

The objective of this lesson is to have young men think about the concept of manhood, formulate an idea of what it means to them and conceptualize on the subject. As high school students they are quickly approaching manhood and need to give some consideration to what their role as a man in this society will be. The strategy that will be exercised here will entail the use of graphic organizers to have the young men determine the central idea of the text so that they can participate effectively in a collaborative discussion on the concept of manhood. There will be a concentration on analyzing how the main character developed during the text, how they interacted with the other characters and how they developed the plot of the short story.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Tuesday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man</i> ” by Richard Wright
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T interpret and evaluate character actions, motives, dialogue and emotions of the short story “ <i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man</i> ” by Richard Wright using a character analysis graphic organizer. S.W.B.A.T describe the use of vernacular in a short story.
Instructional Strategies:	story analysis, primary source images/photos, activating prior knowledge, graphic organizer, small group work, guided practice
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: What constitutes manhood? How does one gain respect?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Introduce the vernacular style of a short story. Vocabulary: <i>scareda, mebbe, Ahma, gimme, Ahm, catlog, lemme, nawsuh, yuh, waal, jusa.</i> Read “<i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man.</i>” Introduce how to evaluate a character’s actions, dialogue and motives in the short story “<i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man.</i>”</p> <p>Guided Practice: Review biography of the author, introduce short story vocabulary, then read the short story as a group or in small groups. Display the primary source</p>

	<p>visuals: Richard Wright. Chunking the short story, discuss the main character's (Dave) actions before the incident in the story. Highlight important points of the story. Jot down notes using a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Independent Practice: Once the story is completed, have the students evaluate Dave during and after the incident in the story.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W's</p> <p>Closure: Did Dave become a man? Did his actions earn him the respect of others?</p> <p>Exit Ticket: How does Dave's behavior mirror some of your behaviors?</p> <p>Homework: Complete an evaluation of one of the following: Dave's mother, father, or the storeowner. Review vernacular vocabulary and determine the meaning of the following words: <i>aftah, oughta, mah, whutchu, erwhile, suppah, bettah, don, yo, gitten, erlong, N, Ah'd, nona, kin, wida, c mon, betcha, yit, ershame, ef.</i></p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: " <i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man</i> " by Richard Wright, graphic organizer
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher's Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: " <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> " www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 3

The goal of this lesson is to bring some attention to outward appearances and how they sometimes play into the stereotypes we have of one another. The big black good man was misjudged based on his outward appearances. He was not anything like the perceptions Olaf had of him.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Wednesday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: " <i>Big Black Good Man</i> " by Richard Wright
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T interpret and evaluate character actions, motives, dialogue and emotions in the short story " <i>Big Black Good Man</i> " by Richard Wright using a character analysis graphic organizer.
Instructional Strategies:	activating prior knowledge, graphic organizer, primary source images/photos, small group work, guided practice
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: Why does one's appearance matter?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Display the primary source visuals: Richard Wright. Review the biography of writer, Richard Wright. Introduce the story vocabulary then read "<i>Big Black Good Man</i>" as a group or in small groups. Vocabulary: <i>denominations, stridently, premonitions, cannibalistic and resplendently.</i> Introduce how perform a character analysis/characterization of the big black good man and Olaf.</p> <p>Guided Practice: Model completion of the character analysis graphic organizer, first</p>

	<p>using a familiar childhood folk tale (i.e., “<i>Anansi the Spider</i>”). Independent Practice: Continue working to complete the graphic organizer for Olaf and the big black good man.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: What is the dialogue between the two (2) men like at the beginning of the short story? How does it change by the end?</p> <p>Exit Ticket: Why was Olaf afraid of the big black good man? Read the lyrics to “<i>Renegade</i>” by Jay-Z featuring Eminem, and then play the audio. Display the primary source visuals: Jay-Z, Eminem, 21st century African American young men. Why would society be afraid of some of the young African American males they encounter?</p> <p>Homework: Complete a character analysis of Lena. Review vocabulary and create sentences for each word.</p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>Big Black Good Man</i> ” by Richard Wright, graphic organizer, “ <i>Renegade</i> ” by Jay-Z featuring Eminem, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 4

The focus of this lesson will involve identifying the main idea of a short story using Caesar of “*Young Lions*.” It will take a look at an embedded theme related to positive and negative relationships. The lesson will have students examine the relationship between Caesar and Carol and how both were negatively affected by one another. This will segue into students dialoguing about their own personal relationships with friends and family and if they have been positively or negatively affected.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Thursday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>Young Lions</i> ” by Edward P. Jones
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T determine the main idea of the short story “ <i>Young Lions</i> ” by Edward P. Jones using a main idea graphic organizer.
Instructional Strategies:	main idea analysis, primary source images/photos, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice, graphic organizer

Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: How do you gain control of an uncontrollable situation?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Display the primary source visuals: Edward P. Jones. Review biography of the author, introduce short story vocabulary then read “<i>Young Lions</i>” as a group. Vocabulary: <i>ventured, splintered, obscene, coincidence, coaxing, anticipate, cocoon, pulsating, conjure</i>. Introduce how to determine the main idea of “<i>Young Lions</i>.”</p> <p>Guided Practice: Model how to determine the main idea of “<i>Young Lions</i>” using a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Independent Practice: After reading the short story, determine the main idea using a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: View the short film: “<i>Hang Time</i>.” How are Caesar’s and Kwame’s circumstances similar in nature? How are they different?</p> <p>Exit Ticket: Why did Caesar recruit Carol to help him in the commission of this crime?</p> <p>Homework: Review the vocabulary “<i>Young Lions</i>” and provide a definition for each word. Use each word in a sentence. Summarize the main idea in the short film, “<i>Hang Time</i>.”</p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>Young Lions</i> ” by Edward P. Jones, graphic organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 5

The intention of this lesson is to have students analyze how characters develop during the course of a story and interact with other characters using Edward P. Jones’ “*The Store*.” This short story will guide the group in a discussion about how fathers. Jones writes this short story in the voices of a man and his father. This story can lay the foundation for the young men to think about their feelings about the fathers, the influences they may or may not have had on their lives as well as how their presence or absence in their lives may have affected who they are today.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Friday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>The Store</i> ” by Edward P. Jones
Objectives:	<p>S.W.B.A.T analyze how the characters develop during the short story “<i>The Store</i>” using a character analysis graphic organizer.</p> <p>S.W.B.A.T describe how the main character of “<i>The Store</i>” interacts with other characters in the story using a character analysis graphic organizer.</p>

Instructional Strategies:	primary source images/photos, graphic organizer, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: What influence has your father had on your life?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Introduce how to analyze the main character’s development in “<i>The Store</i>”.</p> <p>Guided Practice: Introduce the vocabulary for “<i>The Store</i>” and then read it. Model analyzing the main character’s development using a character analysis graphic organizer. Vocabulary: <i>inaugurated, undertaker, revelation, deliberately, descendants, apprentice, exasperated, inducted, mischievous, allegiances, beaucoup, tentativeness, abomination.</i></p> <p>Independent Practice: Highlight all the references the main character makes regarding something his father said or did.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down 3-2-1 Three W’s</i></p> <p>Closure: Do you believe the main character’s father had a positive or negative influence on his life? Give details to support your response.</p> <p>Exit Ticket: How did the main character develop during the course of the story?</p> <p>Homework: How did Penny Jenkins develop during the story? Review vocabulary providing definitions for each word.</p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>The Store</i> ” by Edward P. Jones, graphic organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 6

This lesson focuses on citing evidence in text to support what the author is trying to express. In “*His Mother’s House*,” Santiago has too much power for a twenty (20) year old young man. He fully understands that his family is financially reliant on him. His power leads him to be overbearing and disrespectful, and ultimately to shoot and kill his childhood friend, Humphrey. He recruits all of his family members and close friends into his lifestyle. The result of his lifestyle seems to always end up at his mother’s house despite her wanting to have nothing to do with the life itself.

John Bartram High School Lesson Plan

Week of: _____

Monday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>His Mother’s House</i> ” by Edward P. Jones
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.

Instructional Strategies:	primary source images/photos, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice, graphic organizer
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: Do you believe that would money turn you against your best friend?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Introduce the text vocabulary then read the text. Vocabulary: <i>resignation, feigned, immunity, vital, celebratory, renovated, exhilarated, conspire, indestructible, periodically.</i> Introduce how to cite supporting evidence from the text of short story “<i>His Mother’s House.</i>”</p> <p>Guided Practice: Model how to cite supporting evidence from “<i>His Mother’s House.</i>” Independent Practice: Continue citing supporting evidence that Santiago had turned on Humphrey.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: How did the mothers of Santiago and Humphrey aid in the demise of both of their sons? Cite evidence of this from the text. Read the lyrics of “<i>Tony’s Story</i>” by Meek Mill then play the audio. What are the parallels in the short story and the rap song? Summarize in forty (40) words how the two (2) relate to what is happening in some of our inner-city urban neighborhoods today.</p> <p>Exit Ticket: Read the lyrics of “<i>American Terrorist</i>” by Lupe Fiasco. Discuss the following verse and how relates to the short story, “<i>His Mother’s House</i>” and the rap song, “<i>Tony’s Story</i>”:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“American Terrorist” by Lupe Fiasco</i> <i>Give black man crack, Glocks and things</i> <i>Give red man craps, slot machines</i> <i>Now bring it back, bring it back, bring it back</i> <i>Bring it back, bring it back, bring it back</i> <i>Bring it back, bring it back</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Don't give the black man food</i> <i>Give they red man liquor</i> <i>Red man, fool, black man, nigga</i> <i>Give yellow man tool, make him railroad builder</i> <i>Also give him pan, make him pull gold from river</i></p> <p>Homework: Study the text vocabulary. Provide a definition and sentence for each word. Did the adults in “<i>His Mother’s House</i>” contribute to the demise of Santiago and Humphrey?</p>
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>His Mother’s House</i> ” by Edward P. Jones, copy of “ <i>Tony’s Story</i> ” lyrics by Meek Mill, copy of “ <i>American Terrorist</i> ” lyrics by Lupe Fiasco, graphic organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 7

This lesson will focus on analyzing how the author draws on and transforms character types during the text. Wallace Thurman, a Harlem Renaissance writer, allows Cordelia to be transformed during the text by the man she meets. Cordelia is a carefree teenage girl just out to have fun when she meets a young man who pays her for her sexual services. It is at that moment that she realizes what she has become or what she has allowed herself to become. Many of our young men are not aware of their influence over young women. They are not conscious of what their words and actions can result in. This story will be used to talk about the issue of youth promiscuity and the dangers of it. Cordelia did not see herself as a “*chippie*,” as ladies of the night were then called during the Harlem Renaissance era. However, after realizing that she could be paid to do what she did with the young man in this short story, she continued in the lifestyle. Would Cordelia have become a “*chippie*” had not the young man paid her the two (2) dollars? We do not know for sure, but the two (2) dollars she received that night gave her confirmation of what she had become.

**John Bartram High School
Lesson Plan**

Week of: _____

Tuesday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>Cordelia the Crude</i> ” by Wallace Thurman
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T analyze how the author draws on and transforms character types during the reading and citing evidence from the text “ <i>Cordelia the Crude</i> ” using storyline sequence.
Instructional Strategies:	guided practice, primary source images/photos, graphic organizer activating prior knowledge, small group work
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: What is your idea of a good woman? Describe her intellectually, physically and socially.</p> <p>Direct Instruction: Display visuals of Wallace Thurman. Review his biography. Introduce text vocabulary. Vocabulary: <i>mercenary, bestowing, promiscuity, denote, wanton, saunter, consciously, embryo, squelch, inveigle, brazen, matronly, lackadaisical, demobilization, doused, recalcitrant, facilely, intrigued, amorous, raucous, fatigued, calisthenic, cauterizing, dicty.</i> Read the short story “<i>Cordelia the Crude.</i>” Introduce how a reader analyzes how Thurman draws on Cordelia and then transforms her during the story.</p> <p>Guided Practice: Model the skill introduced in Direct Instruction.</p> <p>Independent Practice: Continue analyzing Cordelia’s transformation during the story, citing evidence from the text.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: How did Thurman transform Cordelia during the story? Give details using evidence from the text.</p> <p>Exit Ticket: Do you believe that Cordelia was who she was at the beginning of the short story or did the young man’s action help to influence her actions? Give details.</p> <p>Homework: Review the vocabulary. Choose five (5) words and use them to</p>

	summarize the young man’s behavior. Then complete the same exercise to describe Cordelia’s behavior.
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>Cordelia the Crude</i> ” by Wallace Thurman, graphic organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 8

Use of “*Three Men*” by Ernest J. Gaines will build on the skill of analyzing how a key scene in a short story is represented. This lesson will speak to the embedded issue of using losing your voice as an individual as a result of how society perceives you and how to use voice to express who you are. Three (3) men in a jail cell learn their voice.

**John Bartram High School
Lesson Plan**

Week of: _____

Thursday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>Three Men</i> ” by Ernest Gaines
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T evaluate connections between texts using a Venn Diagram.
Instructional Strategies:	Story analysis, primary source images/photos, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice, graphic organizer
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: Why is setting (where the story takes place) relevant in a short story?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: View the short film “<i>Raya</i>” to be build background knowledge and to have students begin to make real life connections. Display the visuals of Ernest J. Gaines. Review his biography. Introduce the text vocabulary. Vocabulary: <i>christen, assure, furthermore, associate, Angola, spiritual, eternity, meditating, inhuman, Cajun, facebowl, telegram, trustee, plantation.</i> Read the short story, “<i>Three Men.</i>”</p> <p>Guided Practice: Dialogue about the short story and the film. Model how to analyze a key scene in two (2) different artistic mediums.</p> <p>Independent Practice: Describe the scenes of each medium and explain how they are different and similar.</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: What were three (3) things that happened in “<i>Three Men</i>” that could possibly happen in today’s 21st century society?</p> <p>Exit Ticket: What connections were you able to make from “<i>Raya</i>” and “<i>Three Men</i>”?”</p> <p>Homework: Study the vocabulary. Summarize how the men gained their voice. How</p>

	did Raya gain hers?
Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: “ <i>Three Men</i> ” by Ernest Gaines, graphic organizer, organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher’s Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: “ <i>Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories</i> ” www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Lesson 9

The purpose of this lesson is to draw attention to making inferences and drawing conclusions about the text based on details in the story. “*Tell Martha Not to Moan*” by Sherley Anne Williams will be taught in conjunction with the short film “*Uno’s World*.” The short story is set in urban America and the film urban Namibia. However, the young women, both affected by the men they encounter, share very similar stories. The embedded issue that this short story and short film will allow discussion for is teenage pregnancy. What inferences can be made and conclusions drawn based on the actions of these young people and the cycle of teenage pregnancy?

**John Bartram High School
Lesson Plan**

Week of: _____

Friday, _____

Name:	Keysiah Middleton
Class:	English, Social Studies or Elective Class
Topic:	Short Story Review: “ <i>Tell Martha Not to Moan</i> ” by Sherley Anne Williams
Objectives:	S.W.B.A.T make inferences and draw conclusions based on information from text.
Instructional Strategies:	primary source images/photos, activating prior knowledge, small group work, guided practice, graphic organizers
Daily Activities:	<p>Do Now: Who does the burden of teenage pregnancy fall on, the male or the female, when the two parents separate?</p> <p>Direct Instruction: View the short film “<i>Uno’s World</i>.” Discuss the main issues brought up in the film. Display images of author, Sherley Anne Williams. Review her biography. Introduce the vocabulary to be used from the text. Vocabulary: <i>impression, nonessential, chords, humble</i></p> <p>Guided Practice: Model making inferences and drawing conclusions.</p> <p>Independent Practice:</p> <p>Checkpoints for Student Understanding: <i>Thumbs Up Thumbs Down</i> 3-2-1 Three W’s</p> <p>Closure: What inference can be made about Martha’s future based on her current situation?</p> <p>Exit Ticket: How can Martha circumstance be compared to Uno’s?</p> <p>Homework: What conclusion can you draw about Uno?</p>

Resources/materials and supplies:	A copy of the short story: "Tell Martha Not to Moan" by Sherley Ann Williams, graphic organizer, highlighters, primary source photos
References to Textbooks and Curriculum Guides:	Teacher's Institute of Philadelphia (TIP) curriculum unit: "Teaching American African Males Using Short Stories" www.tip.sas.upenn.edu/

Annotated Bibliography

Suggested Teacher Reading

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi, 2009. *The Thing Around Your Neck*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

In this book of short stories, Adichie turns her penetrating eye on not only Nigeria but America, in twelve dazzling stories that explore the ties that bind men and women, parents and children, Africa and the United States.

Akpan, Uwem, 2008. *Say You're One Of Them*. New York: Back Bay Books.

In five separate narratives, each told from the perspective of a child from a different African country, *Say You're One of Them* vividly portrays the horror and beauty to be found in both the history-altering events and the mundane details of everyday life. In these stories of family, friendship, betrayal and redemption, Akpan highlights the tenacity and perseverance of his young protagonists.

Clarke, John Henrik, Editor, 1966. *Black American Short Stories: A Century of the Best*. New York: Hill and Wang.

John Henrik Clarke gives an account of 100 years of short stories written by African American writers to include classical writers such as Paul Laurence Dunbar, Charles Waddell Chestnut, Claude McKay, Richard Wright, Chester Himes, James Baldwin, Maya Angelou and Alice Walker.

Ferrell, Carolyn, 1997. *Don't Erase Me: Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

The eight stories in this debut collection, mostly focusing on girls in the 'hood, mingle a welcome touch of poetry with rough urban realism. The familiar underclass pathologies surface in Ferrell's fiction: families with absent fathers; incest; domestic violence; and, most importantly, teenage pregnancy. More than half of these first-person narratives are in the voice of girls who hope to escape the casual horrors of the streets (in the South Bronx). Seldom do the fathers care beyond the status symbol of their potency. Though most of the women and girls in the collection wind up disappointed by men, Ferrell never reduces her characters to victims and villains. Ferrell focuses on their struggle to survive, to avoid being "erased." Despite the multiple odds against them, many of Ferrell's characters do find ways to express themselves, often in secret.

Harper, Hill, 2006. *Letters to a Young Brother: MANifest Your Destiny*. New York: Gotham Books.

Hill Harper offers advice to young males via letters in the form of email messages. He also includes inspirational quotes from well known men like Denzel Washington, Will Smith, Ice Cube, Muhammad Ali, James Baldwin, Jay Z, Cesar Chavez, Duke Ellington and Tupac Shakur. These letters address issues that range from being raised in a single parent household, the importance of education, the mind to persevere and not quit, learning from your mistakes to manifesting your destiny.

Hughes, Langston, Editor, 1967. *The Best Short Stories by Black Writers 1899-1967*. New York: Little, Brown and Company

Langston Hughes has given us an edited account of the various short stories of well known African American writers of their time from John Henrik Clarke to Richard Wright as well as short stories published for the first time of lesser known artist over a sixty-eight (68) year period.

Jones, Edward P., 1992. *Lost in the City*. New York: Amistad.

In the 14 stories that comprise *Lost in the City*, Jones maps the terrain of African American Washington, DC, situating his narratives precisely in areas (Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest) defined by their compass relation to the 'Washington they put on post cards', the city centre that 'the white people called the federal enclave'.^[4] Attentive throughout to sectors and boundaries, to unmarked yet unmistakable racial zones, Jones reminds us that the geographical difference between 'the land of white people' (p. 110) and the neighborhoods inhabited by his characters physically reflects the centre-margin relationship of dominant and minority cultures.⁹

Jones, Edward P., 2006, *All Aunt Hagar's Children: Stories*. New York: Amistad.

In this reality-based fiction of 14 sweeping and sublime stories, Edward P. Jones chronicles the African-American experience — on the streets of Washington, DC, in loving and desperately loveless homes, on antebellum plantations, in prison. He has filled this new collection with people who call Washington, DC home. Yet it is not the city's power brokers that most concern him but rather its ordinary citizens. The tales in his *All Aunt Hagar's Children* are substantial and populous, explicitly concerned with the ever-pertinent question: How do we balance duty to others with our own needs?

Kunjufu, Jawanza, 2011. *Understanding Black Male Learning Styles*. Chicago: African American Images.

This educational resource delineates how black males learn differently from other students and what can be done to most effectively reach them. Outlining the differences as both behavioral (attention span, aggression, maturation, energy level, and pressure from peers) and educational (verbal skills, organization, gross and fine motor skills, and reading interests) among others, this proposal provides real-world experiences alongside theories, making this an essential guide for educators, parents, counselors, psychologists, and others involved with black male adolescents.

McMillan, Terry, 1990. *Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African American Fiction*. New York: Penguin Books.

A striking edited collection of works from authors both established and emerging, this is the first original anthology of African-American writing in over a decade. Featured contributors include: J. California Cooper, Marita Golden, Gloria Naylor, Darryl Pinckney, Ntozake Shange, Alice Walker, Ishmael Reed, Terry McMillan, and many others.

Noguera, Pedro A., 2008. *The Trouble With Black Boys...And Other Reflections On Race, Equity, And the Future of Public Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

With a background as a professor, urban sociologist, and school consultant, Noguera draws from a deep well of experience with schools. He culls stories from that experience and from his own life as a black man and father to two sons, and then weaves those stories with educational research, theory, and history. Pedro A. Noguera argues convincingly that it is also indicative of the “gulf in experience” between many poor and minority students and their middle-class educators. Throughout the book, he calls for educators to bridge that gulf, to understand the lives of poor and minority students and to respond with more empathy to their needs. Noguera leaps into a historical analysis of why American public schools have “traditionally prioritized maintaining order and control over students, as opposed to creating humane environments for learning.”

Powell, Kevin, Editor, 2008. *The Black Male Handbook: A Blueprint for Life*. New York: Atria Books.

This edited edition is a collection of essays for Black males on surviving, living, and winning. Kevin Powell taps into the social and political climate rising in the Black community, particularly as it relates to Black males. This is a must-have book, not only for Black male readers, but the women who befriend, parent, partner, and love them.

Stevenson Jr., Howard, C., 2003. *Playing With Anger: Teaching Coping Skills to African American Boys through Athletics and Culture*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.

This volume presents unique, culturally relevant interventions that can teach coping skills to African American boys with a history of aggression. Stevenson provides the history and current events for readers to understand why these youths perceive violence as the only way to react. Interventions and preventative actions developed in the PLAAY project (Preventing Long-Term Anger and Aggression) are presented. These include teaching coping skills and anger

management via athletics such as basketball and martial arts. Frustrations and strengths in those athletics illuminate the players' emotional lives, and serve as a basis for self-understanding and life skill development.

Wright, Richard, 1940. *Eight Men*. New York: Harper Perennial.

This posthumous work of fiction gives an account of eight (8) stories that relate specially to American males of African descent. Each story deals with a particular issue that young African American males encounter in their journey through life. These issues include entering into manhood, gaining the respect of others, false appearances, life on the run, earning a living to maintain a family as well as a few other prevalent issues faced today.

Suggested Student Reading

Wright, Richard, 1940. *Eight Men*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Jones, Edward P., 1992. *Lost in the City*. New York: Amistad.

Jones, Edward P., 2006, *All Aunt Hagar's Children: Stories*. New York: Amistad.

Ferrell, Carolyn, 1997. *Don't Erase Me: Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Akpan, Uwem, 2008. *Say You're One Of Them*. New York: Back Bay Books.

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi, 2009. *The Thing Around Your Neck*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

McMillan, Terry, 1990. *Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African American Fiction*. New York: Penguin Books.

For Extended Student Reading:

Hurston, Zora Neale, 1925. *Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Folk-Tales from the Gulf States*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers

Every Tongue Got to Confess is an extensive volume of African American folklore that Zora Neale Hurston collected on her travels through the Gulf States in the late 1920s. The bittersweet and often hilarious tales -- which range from longer narratives about God, the Devil, white folk, and mistaken identity to witty one-liners -- reveal attitudes about faith, love, family, slavery, race, and community. Together, this collection of nearly 500 folktales weaves a vibrant tapestry that celebrates African American life in the rural South and represents a major part of Zora Neale Hurston's literary legacy.

Hurston, Zora Neale, 1948. *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers

Appearing for the first time in one collection, these stories are rich in language, powerful in imagery, and establish themes that attest to Hurston's tremendous range. The collection maps Hurston's development and concerns as a writer, and provides an important glimpse into the mind and imagination of this African-American novelist, folklorist, and anthropologist.

Appendix

To access the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for English Language Arts and the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content, go to:

http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/Grade_11_Reading_Assessment_Anchors_and_Eligible_Content.pdf

http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA_CC_Standards_6-12_ELA.pdf

To access downloadable blank graphic organizers:

Plot Diagram: <http://docs.docstoc.com/pdf/450897/f5e2d588-b96a-4620-b7ac-14c26046a312.pdf>

Character: <http://www.lapresenter.com/10READERizers.pdf> (pages 3, 4, and 5)

Setting: <http://www.wbrschools.net/curriculum/reading8/setting.pdf>

Theme: <http://www.balancedreading.com/graphorg.pdf>

Conflict: <http://printables.scholastic.com/printables/f.jsp?id=35529>

To access folktales, folklores and legends:

“Anansi the Spider” http://anansistories.com/Traditional_Stories.html

“Bruh Rabbit Falls Down the Well: A Georgia Folktale”
http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2010/07/brer_rabbit_falls_down_the_wel.html

“John Henry: The Steel-Driving Man: A West Virginia Legend”
http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2010/07/john_henry.html

To access information and visuals of Richard Wright:

Biography: <http://www.notablebiographies.com/We-Z/Wright-Richard.html>

Visuals: <http://www.math.buffalo.edu/~sww/wright/wright0.html>

<http://site.xavier.edu/polit/typewriters/typers.html>

To access information, visuals and lyrics for Jay Z and Eminem:

Renegade Lyrics: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jayz/renegade.html>
Jay Z Biography: <http://www.biography.com/people/jay-z-507696>
Jay Z images: <http://bossip.com/379826/that-unauthorized-jay-z-biography-doesnt-reveal-anything-he-didnt-want-you-to-know12006/>
<http://www.theboombox.com/2010/11/23/jay-z-empire-state-of-mind-biography-due-march-2011/>

Eminem Biography: <http://www.biography.com/people/eminem-9542093>
Eminem Visuals: <http://eminem-celebrity-wallpapers.blogspot.com/>

To access information and visuals of Edward P. Jones:

Biography: <http://www.notablebiographies.com/newsmakers2/2005-Fo-La/Jones-Edward-P.html>
Visuals: <http://robertarood.wordpress.com/2009/09/>

To access information and “Tony’s Story” lyrics by Meek Mill:

Biography: <http://www.musicstory.com/music/Meek+Millz/Biography>
Visuals: <http://www.exposay.com/meek-millz-joy-to-the-world-fest-gala-at-the-ritz-carlton-hotel-in-philadelphia-on-december-18-2010/p/43114/40/>
Lyrics: <http://www.elyrics.net/read/m/meek-mill-lyrics/tony-story-lyrics.html>

To access information and “American Terrorist” lyrics by Lupe Fiasco:

Biography: http://www.aceshowbiz.com/celebrity/lupe_fiasco/biography.html
Visuals: http://music.wikia.com/wiki/Lupe_Fiasco
Lyrics: <http://www.elyrics.net/read/l/lupe-fiasco-lyrics/american-terrorist-lyrics.html>

To access information, visuals and Wallace Thurman’s “Cordelia the Crude”:

Biography: <http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap9/thurman.html>
Visuals and Short Story: <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~wilker/harlem/Thurman.htm>

To access information and visuals of Ernest J. Gaines:

Biography: <http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap10/gaines.html>
Visuals: <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/gaines-ernest-james-1933>

To access information and visuals of Sherley Anne Williams:

Biography: <http://voices.cla.umn.edu/artistpages/williamsSherley.php>

Visuals: <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aaw/williams-sherley-anne-1944-1999>