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Introduction from the Editor's Desk

This issue of the *Virginia English Journal* focuses on the idea of relevance in the English classroom—what educators do to make their instruction relevant to their students' out-of-school lives, cultures, backgrounds and experiences.

I'm thrilled that this issue presents a wide range of manuscripts that educators can use to add to their repertoires of relevant and engaging instruction. These works provide diverse perspectives on the many forms that relevance can take in the English classroom. Morgan McDougall's piece discusses issues and ideas related to teaching Native American literature, Nadia Kalman and Christine Woods' article advocates for the significance of teaching contemporary world literature and describes how the organization Words Without Borders provides resources related to this important topic, Jennifer Cassidy's manuscript describes innovative and effective uses of cell phones in the classroom, and Alexandra Cequeria's piece discusses a website she created called Diversiteach that addresses the need for diverse literature in today's English classroom. In addition, this issue contains a though-provoking and innovative poem by David Black written in the double-dactyl format and titled "Before the Written Word."

This is my last issue as editor of the *Virginia English Journal*; I want to thank all of you for your wonderful support during my editorship. I am thrilled to announce that the fantastic Jenny Martin will be the next editor of this outstanding publication.

All the best,

Sean

Sean Ruday, Ph.D.
Editor, *Virginia English Journal*
Associate Professor of English Education, Longwood University

Jennifer Cassidy

"Can We Use Our Phones?": The Use of Mobile Phones in the English Teacher's Classroom

Introduction

The use of mobile phones within the classroom is a topic English teachers would rather avoid when it comes to developing their curriculum and setting class rules. Across the country, schools are striving to provide students more access to technology by installing SmartBoards into classrooms and supplying more computers for student use; but, one tool the majority of students already have is their mobile phone. Mobile phones are hand-held computers that students are familiar with, if not experts on. Within their device is the ability to surf the Internet, text a classmate, access a Google Docs, and edit a presentation. Technology allows students to learn both in a group and independently, while easily being modified by teachers to differentiate student learning.

Position

Mobile phones are viewed as distractions in the classroom, and for good reason. Students would rather text and scroll through social media than learn new vocabulary or read *The Great Gatsby*. Due to this misuse, students are required to keep their phone out of sight and are asked to not use it unless given permission. As teachers attempt to keep students engaged, students feel a pull to their phones, itching to check it and not miss a text message.

Rather than view mobile phones as only a distraction, teachers should incorporate their use more frequently. Schools are enforcing a "BYOD" rule, meaning 'Bring Your Own Device,' and English teachers should capitalize on this movement. This rule allows students to bring their phone into the classroom, but requires it to not be used unless approved by the teacher. As students begin using their mobile phone for educational purpose, it becomes less distracting as students are given the freedom to involve their device in their learning.

Rationale

The English classroom is often viewed as a place of reading and writing, with little room for differentiation. However, with technology, teachers have a variety of opportunities to differentiate students' learning. Though SmartBoards and laptops provide an abundance of resources to enrich the English curriculum, mobile phones place learning in the students' hands.

Why Do Students Inappropriately Use Their Phone?

Understanding why students inappropriately use their phone is important to do before incorporating its use in the English curriculum. Teachers view phone use as a sign of disobedience, and though it is, the problem goes a little deeper. Students misbehave and lack focus due to boredom or internal conflict. In a study completed by Bolkan and Griffin (2017) on the misuse of mobile phones in the classroom, they found that the "instructors' behaviors influence students' experiences of boredom in class, and this lack of arousal indirectly impacts students' decisions to interact with their cell phones" (p. 324). Just as a student will talk when they are bored in class, they will use their phone. Bolkan and Griffin (2017) label it as a "behavioral avoidance strateg[y]" (p. 318) that allows them to distract themselves from a boring situation.

By using technology in the classroom, specifically mobile phones, students are more likely to engage with the lesson. Resources are available that allow students to creatively and purposefully use their phones to achieve lesson goals. The use of texting or social media in the curriculum should be viewed as an opportunity to engage students, not something to ban.

An Opportunity to Text

A teacher's biggest pet peeve is having students text in class, but as stated above, students text when they are not engaged or challenged. Texting is not the enemy; it actually increases opportunities for collaboration between students and student and teacher. Thomas and Muñoz (2016) note that ""texting" is the number one means of communication by teenagers" (p. 22), making a lesson plan with the opportunity to text a homerun. While students may use the dreaded SMS language, English teachers may rest assured that texting does not negatively affect a student's literacy. According to a study on the correlation between text message abbreviations and school literacy, completed by Plester, Wood, & Joshi (2009), the "extent of children's textism use was able to predict significant variance in their word reading ability" (p. 155) and found that students who learn SMS language at a younger age are exposed to language earlier. The use of SMS language at a younger age is beneficial for the student, as they are building their vocabulary and enhancing their reading ability.

Differentiation Using the Mobile Phone

Smartphones offer a built-in camera, a tool not readily available to all students. Thomas and Muñoz (2016) state the camera is multi-purposeful, offering teachers the opportunity to differentiate instruction "by appealing to auditory or visual learners" (p. 22) through the students' creation of podcasts or videos. By employing the use of mobile phones to create interactive projects for students, they are being challenged to think critically and creatively.

The possibility for cell phone activities do not end there. For example, Twitter is a terrific resource for teachers and there are an abundance of blogs online that share activities to try in the English classroom. A favorite activity is for students to tweet as a character. Students will adopt a character and tweet as they believe that character would, allowing the students to dive into the text and understand the character's true feelings. In this capacity, Twitter is being used educationally, but students are engaged and using a favorite site in school; being able to use out-of-school activities in school is always a plus.

The Student Take

While creating lesson plans, it is important to assess what the student would want to learn. Without student engagement, the learning goal may not be met. In the study completed by Thomas and Muñoz (2016), 628 students were surveyed regarding their use of their phone and their opinions of its place in the classroom. Overall, the students stated that phones in the curriculum is a good idea as it has many benefits: "(a) engagement, (b) motivation for attendance, (c) motivation for learning, (d) creativity, (e) productivity, (f) reducing the digital gap, (g) collaboration, (h) communication, (i) digital fluency, (j) providing learning opportunities, and (k) differentiation of instruction" (p. 27). Students identified digital fluency as a main reason to incorporate phones into lessons while also reducing the digital divide that exists between social economic statuses.

Conclusion

Thomas and Muñoz (2016) state that "due to their multitude of technological features, mobile phones are often compared to a Swiss Army Knife" (p. 28): both useful and dangerous. But technology in the classroom is an ally, not a foe. Including phones in English curriculums allows for creative, challenging, and critical-thinking projects while also increasing digital fluency. They maximize student engagement and creativity and allow the teacher to easily differentiate a lesson to differing learning styles. Implementing mobile phones into the English classroom opens a new world of possibilities when it comes to engagement and learning.

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Jennifer is from Chesapeake, Virginia and is a current senior at Longwood University. She is a major in English with a concentration in Secondary Education and will receive her teaching license upon graduation in May 2019. Jennifer hopes to teach English at the high school level beginning next fall.

Before the Written Word
A Double-Dactyl

Whackery-sackery
Addison borrowed "Sir
Roger de Coverly"—
Hollywood, too.

Alastair Sims danced an
audiovisual
reel to this tune, as the
rustics still do.

– David Black

David Black, former poetry editor of English Journal, lives in Louisa, VA. He has published widely in regional magazines such as Now & Then, Zone 3, Tar River Poetry, *and* Appalachian Journal. *His fourth book,* Aspects of a Crosscut Saw, *just came out (Amazon). He is writing a new collection focused on Ireland and Scotland.*

Alexandra Cequeria

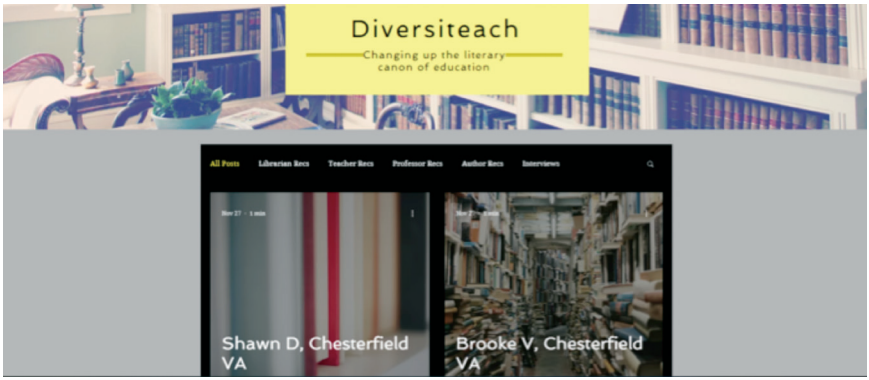
Diversiteach: A Quest for Collaboration and Community in Diverse English Classrooms

Throughout my undergraduate experience in secondary English education, one aspect of the classroom has always been clear to me: presenting texts that show a wide range of cultures and backgrounds. Even as a student in high school, I found that it was important to read stories and characters that represented differing perspectives from my own. When I decided I wanted to become an English teacher, I acquired a strong determination to include as many diverse texts into my lessons as possible. As I began to observe other teachers, however, I noticed that diverse texts still haven't made a breakthrough in the English curriculum.

The need for diverse literature is ever-present in the modern English classroom. While both local and national standards move towards encouraging or even requiring diverse texts in the classroom, many schools are still teaching the same literature as previous generations. The reasons for the lack of diverse texts varies, but one of the main issues is that teachers simply need a place to start their research. There are so many poems, short stories, and even novels that include diverse characters and stories that make for great teaching but are overshadowed by more popular texts.

I created my website, Diversiteach, in an effort to solve this growing issue in education surrounding diverse literature. My website is a resource for teachers and librarians around the country to come together and discuss and recommend diverse texts. When considering this project, I wanted a format that would be easily available and accessible to everyone. In order to achieve a collaborative online environment for teachers and librarians, I created a blog-like website for ease of access and readability.

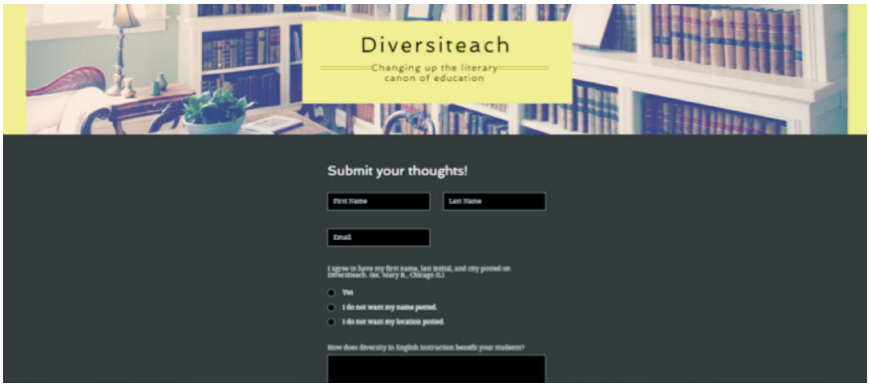
The website's format is intended to make finding potential texts for the classroom simple. Teachers and librarians from all over the country can submit a recommendation form to the website to be reviewed and eventually posted to the website. The posts are organized by the profession and general location of the submitter so that teachers and librarians can locate texts that meet their local academic needs. Once I received submissions from professors and even authors, I specified the classifications of recommendations even further. Following my belief in a wide range of perspectives, this website considers many different perspectives of literature and education.



Since this project was something inspired by the great work of others, I included a list of helpful resources on my website for viewers to explore. The resources I selected are databases I found online of diverse texts and the link to We Need Diverse Books, a non-profit organization geared towards inclusive literature in classrooms. My website is not intended to compete with already existing resources for diverse texts, but to be an inclusion into the efforts of including diverse literature into our schools.

My main goal with this website was to make the implementation of diverse texts into the classroom not only simple, but enjoyable. Literature that involves diverse perspectives should not be considered an inconvenient requirement for English classrooms. It is my belief that as our students' perspectives change over time, so should the texts we teach. While the more traditional texts that have been taught over the many years of English education are indeed important, I believe that we should strive to include new texts into the literary canon of

education. This change starts with the perspectives of our great teachers and librarians that constantly strive towards inclusivity in the classroom.



As the website receives new submissions, the success of the website increases. I am determined to continue receiving submissions from a wide variety of professions and locations around the country. I also have many ideas to improve the website, including creating a section about national and state standards and creating a master-list of the already recommended texts on the website. My project is still small, but I hope to widen the range of viewers and posters in time. As I reflect on my creation of the website, I believe that I have implemented my beliefs into a system that can potentially help others. I am always considering the needs of contemporary students, and I think that creating a collaborative environment for their teachers to learn about new texts ultimately benefits their English education. Diverse literature not only reflects the students that we teach, but also opens their view to people that are different from them. As we make strides toward the inclusion of diverse texts into the classroom, we make strides toward a more sympathetic and open-minded generation of students.

Alexandra Cequeria is currently a senior completing her undergraduate education at Longwood University for English Education. Her educational interests include British literature, diverse literature, and creative writing. She will be completing her student teaching in the spring of 2019.

Morgan E. McDougall

"Expanding Horizons: Teaching Native American Multicultural Literature in the Secondary Language Arts Classroom"

Abstract

"Expanding Horizons: Teaching Native American Multicultural Literature in the Secondary Language Arts Classroom" analyzes the various factors surrounding Native American literature, including: why it has been relegated to minimal use in the secondary English Language Arts (ELA) classroom, what the possible benefits of using such literature might include, and practical suggestions for implementation within the secondary ELA classroom. Each of these factors are supported and guided by various pedagogies and theories, such as critical and equity pedagogies and reader-response theory. The argument within the article aims to increase the use of Native American literature in the secondary ELA classroom by making connections to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA easier to recognize and integrate.

Although Native Americans had lived in North America for hundreds of years before colonists arrived from Europe, their history and representation within school curricula and mainstream society in the United States have been muted. Without a clear representation of Native American people and culture, stereotypes have emerged in order to fill the gap in knowledge. These stereotypes have maintained their positioning within the mainstream culture, often providing false and misguided knowledge about Native Americans. They are furthered by the portrayal of Native Americans as "outsiders" in television, advertisements, and movies; they are viewed as "Other" and perceived to be savage, hostile, and uncivilized. In order to begin deconstructing these stereotypes and helping to educate students about the reality of Native Americans and their culture in the United States, an effective starting point would be for teachers to guide students through reading fiction by and about Native Americans, such as *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (2009).

While reading novels associated with the classical canon can provide students with an introduction into the types of reading that they should be aware of as they move into postsecondary institutions, it is simply not enough to stop with these canonical novels. It is extremely important to make sure that students are exposed to works of contemporary multicultural literature outside of the classical canon, and even works outside of adapted versions of the canon. This means not just looking at mainstream multicultural novels, but also at smaller pieces of work by other multicultural authors. Exposing students to works of contemporary multicultural literature allows them to become more conscious of themselves in

relation to the rest of the world by expanding their perspectives, build empathy for individuals outside of their own culture, and deconstruct racial stereotypes.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, written by Sherman Alexie and illustrated by Ellen Forney (2009), does a wonderful job of presenting the reality of Native Americans living on reservations in the United States in a manner that is appropriate and interesting for students in the secondary English Language Arts (ELA) classroom. Unlike texts that merely describe the situation of Native Americans, such as historical documents, this novel presents similar information in a manner that combines relatable experiences and illustrations that make it more engaging for students. While the text is not a graphic novel, the images included, which appear multiple times throughout each chapter, greatly aid in the task of humanizing the characters and give a visual representation to support the text. Humanizing the characters through illustrations is one of the defining characteristics of the novel that make it a wonderful candidate to provide students with cultural information about Native Americans and helps students better understand and empathize with that culture.

The history of Native Americans in the United States is complex and has drastically shaped the types of representation of Native Americans that we know today. Through all of the historical events and displacements of Native Americans that have happened within the last few hundreds of years by European settlers, Native Americans have been ascribed various identities and stereotypes by non-Natives. These stereotypes have worked to represent the Native American as "Other." Society often views Natives as different, disconnected from society, and still maintains the idea of Native American males as "savages." Relegated to being "Other," Native Americans have been marginalized. This marginalization is unique, at least when compared to other underrepresented minorities living within the United States, in that Natives are not simply marginalized in culture and literature, but they have also been physically marginalized. After Europeans first began to colonize the United States, Native Americans were given two choices: assimilate to the mainstream culture of the White Europeans or move onto secluded reservations. This choice forced Native Americans to either abandon their culture or maintain their culture in a place where it could not grow and develop organically. This was the first step taken to marginalize Natives and their culture. For the Natives who chose to move to reservations and maintain their culture, the environments into which they were placed created an extremely negative impact on the culture. After being removed from their historic lands, often forced onto new lands in close proximity to hostile tribes, many Natives struggled to adjust to their new ways of living. They found themselves unable to farm the new lands, which created severe economic issues. This often led to depression, alcoholism, drug addiction, and disease ("Life on the Reservations," 2018).

The connection between the United States and the Natives living on reservations is unique in that a majority of Americans simply do not know the reality of Native history and culture. What Americans typically know about Native American culture has come from brief moments in history classes — which often focus on incredibly old Native culture and are whitewashed — or from stereotyped representations of Natives in books and television when few Native characters are included. Although Natives were living within the borders of the United States long before any European settlers arrived, the manner in which they are regarded is as if they did not exist. According to the article, "Native Americans, The Feudal System, and the Protestant Work Ethic: A Unique View of the Reservation" (2005), Native Americans are subjected to a majority of the same factors as other minority groups, including: poverty, discrimination, low education, alcoholism, and high suicide rates. The one aspect in which they differ from other minority groups within the United States is that they were living in the United States before the White European settlers began to arrive:

> Native Americans are unique in that they are the original inhabitants of this continent... They developed unique cultures and settled in separate parts of the Western hemisphere, developing viable and distinct societies. When White Europeans first came to this new world they began a practice of conquest, domination, and annihilation of this population...This is in contrast to other minority groups. (p. 3)

This difference in minority status within the United States seems to be one of the determining factors for why the Native population has been marginalized and, essentially, hidden from mainstream culture. Natives arrived first, and therefore, needed to be "erased" in order for the new settlers to develop their own culture and community. White Europeans began by taking the land of the Native Americans, then attempted to relocate them, which directly shaped the ability of Native culture to be continued and created.

The physical distance between reservations and a majority of the other communities within the United States is an important factor that cannot be underestimated. Whether members of the community moved to reservations willingly or by force, the disconnect between the reservation culture and mainstream culture is apparent. On the reservation, Native Americans have their own society, including: stores, homes, and community centers. Many reservations even abide by their own laws and regulations, allowing them to exist almost completely outside of traditional American culture. According to the United States Census Bureau (2011), there were 5.2 million Native Americans living in the United States in 2010. Of these 5.2 million people, only around 22% lived on reservations or other off-reservation trust lands. These numbers establish two ideas regarding the stability and preservation of Native American culture. First, the proportion of Natives living on reservations is much smaller than those living outside of reservations, signifying that many Natives are most likely assimilating to American

culture and leaving behind their own heritage. Second, the percentage of Natives that are living on the reservations is small enough that their impact on the overall American culture is very little, just as with any minority culture living within the United States. This forces the question: how can Native American culture be maintained and explored by individuals outside of the reservation, and distributed to the mainstream American culture in a productive and meaningful manner that helps others outside of the community gain knowledge and insight?

Since the culture has largely been hidden from the mainstream, it is no surprise that literature focusing on the realities of Native Americans is not often taught in secondary Language Arts classrooms. Keithly and Rombough (2005) suggest that, concerning the future of Native Americans, there are four possible routes to explore:

> The first is to continue with the status quo. A second alternative would be to embark upon yet another push for the full assimilation of Native Americans into mainstream American culture and perhaps end reservation life. A third alternative is to help reservations become richer and more materially comfortable, including the return of significant portions of disputed land seized by the federal government. The fourth alternative is developing an enhanced appreciation of Native American culture and what elements could be useful in charting the future course of our national well-being. (p. 10)

The fourth option, which I explore throughout the duration of this article, seems to be the best opportunity and most beneficial for all involved. Although extra effort will be required to help educate the American population on issues concerning Native culture, doing so will teach skills that can be generalized to a variety of contexts. Especially when implementing similar teachings using literature at the secondary and postsecondary levels, students will be able to gain an abundance of information concerning cultures other than their own, leading to a greater awareness of themselves and the rest of the world. While they will learn specific information about Natives in this proposed reading, students will be able to take the skills they have learned through the process — critical reading, writing, and thinking — and apply them when learning and engaging with other cultures as well.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian shares the story of Junior, a young boy living on the Spokane reservation. Throughout the novel, which is told solely from Junior's perspective, there are various stereotypes at play: first, stereotypes about Junior as a Native American from individuals living outside of the reservation, and second, stereotypes about Junior from individuals that are living alongside him on the reservation. Alexie's story-telling technique connects especially with young adults, which is the main reason why I argue that this novel can effectively help to deconstruct racial stereotypes when used in the secondary

ELA classroom. Readers are able to learn the story of Junior, a boy that is encountering situations that they may be able to relate to in some form. Through many connection-building moments that Junior experiences, such as bullying, dealing with an alcoholic father, and struggling to make friends, Alexie is able to bring in information about discrimination. Due to the fact that Alexie has already used the beginning of the novel to build a connection with readers by sharing some of the everyday details of Junior's life that they most likely experience on a daily basis as well, they are more likely to listen and build empathy for Junior. Junior gets into fights with his sister and parents, enjoys spending time with his best friend Rowdy, and draws cartoons in his free time; all characteristics that many readers are able to relate. Although he is most likely from a different culture than many readers of the novel, they feel as if they can understand him. The cultural differences do not seem nearly as important, as Alexie has shown that no matter their backgrounds, many teenagers experience similar events. Bridging this gap is one of the main characteristics that many pieces of contemporary multicultural literature are able to accomplish. As a genre, fiction often allows readers to build empathy for the protagonist. For this reason, the engagement of contemporary multicultural literature in the ELA classroom can be seen as essential. If this connection is going to be built when engaging with literature anyway, why not use that empathetic connection to help students understand topics that they may be unfamiliar with, such as different cultures or backgrounds from their own?

Throughout the course of the novel, readers follow Junior through major life changes. First, Junior decides that he would like to attend school outside of the reservation. This task proves to be not as simple as one would think. In the process, Junior loses his only friend on the reservation, must walk miles to and from school every day, and feels as if he has abandoned his culture. These situations are what Alexie uses to inform readers of multiple cultural experiences: how people outside of the reservation treat Native Americans, the hardships that Native Americans encounter on a daily basis, and the discrimination that Native Americans face when they attempt to interact with the world outside of the reservation. If taught in a supportive environment, the connection that students are able to build with the characters in multicultural literature can prove to have lasting benefits: "The development of empathetic responses to multicultural characters' dilemmas requires students to develop a character-centered perspective on the basis of a variety of information about the characters' world" (Louie, 2005, p. 567). This empathetic response to characters from readers can continue even beyond the novel. After building the connection to a character in a multicultural novel, students are able to learn more about that character's history and culture. According to Rosenblatt:

> In its simplest terms, literature may offer us an emotional outlet. It may enable us to exercise our senses more intensely and more fully than we otherwise have time or

> opportunity to...Furthermore, it may provide experiences that would not otherwise be either possible or wise to introduce into our own lives…Through the medium of literature we participate in imaginary situations, we look on at characters living through crises, we explore ourselves and the world about us. (pp. 36-37)

This perspective is especially effective when reading a piece of contemporary multicultural literature, such as *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. Through the situations and descriptions provided throughout the novel, readers not only learn about the life of Junior, but also learn about the situations encountered by many Native Americans. Some students may not notice, but they are learning about Native American culture in general, especially when a novel is written by an "insider" of the culture. Alexie is exactly this; coming from a Native American background just like Junior, many of the experiences described in the novel are general experiences that can be telling of the life of Native Americans.

Rather than simply stating facts or pieces of information about the culture in question, many authors of contemporary multicultural literature intertwine this information into the plot of the stories they are writing. Alexie takes the opportunity to do this in almost every chapter of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. These moments not only help readers build a connection with the characters, but also help them learn more about the culture the characters are involved with. By the end of the novel, readers know about the structure of a reservation, classic family dynamics, and chronic issues that impact individuals on reservations. For example, when Junior is first beginning his transition to attending school outside of the reservation, readers are able to meet the reality of living on a reservation. Junior explains:

> My day began as it usually did. I got out of bed at dark thirty, and rummaged around the kitchen for anything to eat. All I could find was a package of orange fruit drink mix, so I made a gallon of that, and drank it all down. Then I went into the bedroom and asked Mom and Dad if they were driving me to school. "Don't have enough gas," Dad said and went back to sleep. Great I'd have to walk. (Alexie. 2009. p. 70)

Subverting Native stereotypes, readers discover that Junior's life is not what is typically expected. He struggles to find anything to eat for breakfast, which is something that continuously comes up throughout the novel, and discovers that the family car does not have enough gas to make it to school. For this reason, Junior must walk to school if he wants to go, another activity that readers discover is a common occurrence. The difficulty of surviving is abundantly clear, as money issues are apparent to Junior, who is just a child himself. Later in the novel, as the money issues continue, Alexie includes an illustration that

depicts Junior's transportation issues. This illustration, which takes up an entire page, is titled "Junior Gets to School." The illustration is broken into six boxes, one for each day of the week in addition to the title box. These boxes describe the various methods and experiences that Junior must go through in order to make it to school. The captions read, "No gas money," "Gas money; car isn't running," "Dad gives me a ride, car breaks down 1 mile from school," "Mom gives me a ride; Dad too hungover," and "No gas money; nobody stops to pick me up" (Alexie, 2009, p. 88). Each of these captions demonstrate the difficulty associated with being a Native American from a reservation attempting to interact with the outside world. Not only is this transition difficult on a social level, but it is also difficult on a financial level. Although presented in a light-hearted manner, the illustrations depict a darker message: being a Native American is difficult, especially in places where they are pushed to the side and forgotten about. The combination of Junior's story and the illustrations help expose readers to the realities of Native American life, something that they will most likely never discuss in a school setting. Becoming aware of these issues, especially through a piece of fiction, allows students to build empathy for Native American issues, learn more about Native culture, and use this knowledge to deconstruct the racial stereotypes that they may have held before reading the novel.

The building of empathy for characters within Alexie's novel is also furthered by the inclusion of character illustrations and comments. Almost every time an important character is discussed within the novel, Alexie follows the text with a full-page illustration of the character. Not only are readers able to build empathy for these characters through their descriptions and experiences but are also able to put a "face to the name." The illustrations are also surrounded by brief text-box descriptions of the characters, often expressive of the characters' personalities and their larger involvement within the Native American culture. One of the best examples of this within the novel is the example of Junior's grandmother. This illustration is given an entire page and validates that although she is a Native American, that is not the only "label" that can (or should) be ascribed to her. In addition to the illustrated image of Junior's grandmother, there are also multiple comments surrounding the image. Some of these comments include: "Her best dish is Salmon mush (much better than it sounds)," "house dress purchased in 1972 for $10," "basketball sneakers because 'she's got mad skills,'" and "makes her living selling beaded keychains on eBay (Highly Sacred Aboriginal Transportation Charms)" (Alexie, 2009, p. 69). Each of these comments establish her Native heritage, while simultaneously breaking down some of the stereotypes surrounding Native culture. The most telling of these would be "makes her living selling beaded keychains on eBay (Highly Sacred Aboriginal Transportation Charms)" (p. 69). This obviously sarcastic comment shows that there are stereotypes surrounding Native Americans, such as that they are magical or "other worldly" and although this may not be true, it is beneficial for his grandmother to play into the stereotype in order to make a profit due to the fact that it is widely believed by

individuals outside of the Native American community. She is more likely to make a profit by exaggerating the stereotypes surrounding Native Americans, rather than simply selling a regular keychain. This is just one example where stereotypes are directly addressed and corrected by Alexie within the novel. If readers are able to take this information, learn more about cultures outside of their own, they will be much better equipped to deconstruct racial stereotypes that they may encounter in situations outside of literature. This act of deconstructing racial stereotypes can be even further supported through close instruction and critical pedagogy, where teachers bring in supplemental materials such as newspaper articles, primary sources, YouTube videos, and images to help students additionally learn about the Native American culture.

While the beginning of this article demonstrated the various moments and skills that can be gained through the reading of minority multicultural literature, this section will demonstrate example lessons that can be used to help aid in the teaching of the genre. Focusing specifically on *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, I will propose two lessons that could be implemented throughout a unit taught in a secondary ELA class.

There are various pedagogies and theories that have helped to shape the lessons provided. These include: reader-response theory, equity pedagogy, and critical pedagogy. While equity pedagogy and critical pedagogy have helped to shape the structure of the lessons themselves, including the positioning of the teacher and students, reader-response theory has helped to determine the various questions and prompts that are used throughout the lessons to help students question and critique previously held systems of knowledge.

The first example of a lesson that could aid in the teaching of the novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Alexie is titled, "Pre-Reading Instruction." This lesson is intended to be completed with students before beginning to read the novel in order to prepare them for the content discussed within the novel. In order to produce the intended benefits from reading minority multicultural literature, it is important that students are able to have a meaningful foundation of knowledge surrounding the topic before beginning to read. Banks and McGee Banks (1995) support this position and refer to this portion of planning as "Pre-reading Instruction." According to Banks and McGee Banks, "Pre-reading instruction may help students to understand and enter into a new text world. When students have difficulty comprehending an unfamiliar text world, they may judge that world negatively or refuse to read, calling the book 'stupid' or 'boring' (Spears-Bunton, 1990)" (1995). By helping students to gain a foundation in the subjects that will be explored in a piece of literature, they are more likely to be willing to engage with the literature and immerse themselves in the unfamiliar. The types of pre-reading instruction will differ from one novel to the next, but when focusing

specifically on *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, this instruction should include a combination of historical and current information regarding Native Americans in the United States. This historical information could be presented through multiple mediums, including: video clips, audio clips, government primary documents, and Native American autobiographies. The use of traditional textbooks could also provide information, but it is important to provide the variety of information that will help guide students to begin questioning their current systems of brief, as called for with critical pedagogy and equity pedagogy.

Louie (2005) furthers the argument of Banks and McGee Banks by explaining that "providing a context increases empathy" (p. 575). In order for students to be able to connect with a piece of literature, and subsequently build connections and empathy for the characters within the text, it is essential that they understand the context of the characters and situations within the text. This claim is supported through a research study that Louie conducted with a group of secondary Language Arts students. In an attempt to determine the factors that shape increased empathy, Louie implemented a sample unit plan covering the story of a Chinese individual. Regarding her experience, Louie (2005) writes:

> During the six-week period, Sandy and I had created a context in which students could interpret situations in ways different from what they were used to in Greenville. Although we could not force empathy upon the students, we provided contextual information, literature, and discussion opportunities to help students assume the literary characters' positions, which reflected the characters' sociopolitical background, their cultural norms, and their social values. Students questioned profusely as they adjusted themselves to see the world through the characters' lenses. (p. 577)

By providing background information and context for students regarding the texts that they are reading, teachers allow for simple connections to be built. Even if the establishment of context does not lead into a connection between the student and characters, it will at least build a foundation for the student that makes the reading process interesting and enjoyable (Appendix A).

A second requirement that could be included to allow students to conclude a unit teaching *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* would be a "Portfolio Assessment." According to Banks and McGee Banks (1995) one practice that can support equity pedagogy and its goals for students is a portfolio assessment:

> Portfolio assessment also gives students an opportunity to demonstrate their growth over time, and for teachers to give students ongoing support and encouragement

> (Valencia, Hiebert, & Afflerbach, 1994). Students can use portfolios to document the complexity and individuality of their work and to reflect on their progress and areas that need improvement. Portfolios contribute to sound assessment decisions and to student development. They describe and provide materials that collectively suggest the scope and quality of a student's performance. Portfolios also provide the structure needed for teachers and students to better understand and make connections between teaching and learning. (p. 156)

In addition to supporting the learning process for students, the portfolio assessment also allows teachers to reflect on their own teaching process and determine how to improve teaching in the future. As educators, it is important that we keep curriculum relevant and engaging for our students. Simply asking students to read from a textbook is no longer enough to convey information. Rather, we must use a variety of lesson styles to deliver information, taking the time to fully plan and organize the lessons. Ending the unit with a Portfolio assessment, where the students can collect the writing and other assignments that they have completed throughout the unit, allows students to reflect on the progress they have made and new understandings that they have gained.

The manner is which the assessment is conducted in important, as well. Banks and McGee Banks (1995) also argue:

> Equity pedagogy has important implications for assessment. Educators who embrace it must interrogate traditional tests and letter grades. Assessment strategies based on the assumption that all students can learn provide opportunities for students to improve their performances. The teacher who embraces equity pedagogy frequently gives students detailed feedback on poorly prepared assignments and asks students to "revisit" their work. Written comments instead of letter grades provide opportunities for teachers to identify areas of competence as well as to suggest strategies for improvement and remediation. (p.155)

Therefore, not only is the Portfolio assessment itself supportive of equity pedagogy, but the manner in which a teacher should interpret the portfolio assessment is also designed to be supportive of equity pedagogy. Rather than simply completing a rubric and providing minimal feedback, equity pedagogy encourages teachers to provide feedback that is meaningful and supportive of student learning. Feedback is to be viewed as a vehicle for continued learning, rather than an end point that does not encourage further student development. This means providing extensive comments that ask the student to continue development and questioning, instead of simply assigning a letter grade to the portfolio.

This lesson asks students to compile the various pieces of writing that they have completed throughout the unit into a portfolio, which will be submitted electronically if technology availability allows. Throughout the course of the unit, students will create various pieces of writing, including: responses to discussion questions, narrative stories, and responses to informational materials. While all of these should be submitted individually and provided with meaningful feedback from a teacher throughout the unit, the portfolio is an opportunity for all of the writings to be collected in one location where they can be easily accessed for years to come (Appendix B).

Ultimately, through the reading of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* in coordination with implementation of the example lesson plans, students can begin to deconstruct their previously held notions and stereotypes of Native Americans and other indigenous peoples. By providing students with historically accurate information about Native American people and culture and holding discussions in a safe environment with teacher support, students can begin questioning why these stereotypes came about and search for the truth. After multiple practice sessions with similar materials, students will be able to apply the skills of deconstruction and critical thinking to a variety of stereotypes beyond Native Americans.

APPENDIX A: PRE-READING INSTRUCTION

Duration: 45-50 Minutes

Novel: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

Goal(s): The goals of this in-class assignment are as follows:

1. To begin gathering general knowledge about Native American people and culture.

2. To promote dialogue and interaction between students.

3. To create the basis of knowledge for the upcoming novel, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.

Standards: The English Language Arts/Literacy Common Core State Standards achieved are:

1. RI.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

2. RI.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to a-\ dress a question or solve a problem.

Necessary Material(s): YouTube Videos
Government (primary) documents about Native Americans
Short informational texts about Native American history
Short biography from Native American individual

Material to be Taught: History of Native Americans in the United States

Activity: Pre-Reading Instruction

1. Allow students time during class to view and read the selected materials about Native American history within the United States.
   a. Ask that students annotate each of the text documents for use later in the activity.

2. Following the reading, ask students to engage in a full-class discussion of the texts:
   a. What did they learn from each source?
   b. How does this information further/change information that they previously held about Native Americans?

3. Ask students to compare and contrast the information provided in the texts by writing on the chalkboard/whiteboard/SMART board/etc. This could be done through using a Venn Diagram or a T-Chart.
   a. Allow volunteers to share multiple points to place into the Diagram/Chart.
   b. Ask that each student also records the information discussed in their own journals.

4. Introduce the novel, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian. Ask that students begin to read and complete Chapter 1 before the next class meeting.

Teacher Prep: Because this topic is heavy in historical information, it is important that the teacher be prepared for the various directions which it could take. Below are some tips and suggestions for beginning this discussion.

1. Sources should be viewed and read in advance of the class meeting, with annotation used to highlight important moments and discussions within each of the texts.

2. Several questions should be prepared in advance to guide the full-class discussion. In addition to preparing the questions themselves, teachers should also be prepared to help students answers these questions, if necessary.

APPENDIX B: PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Duration: 45-50 Minutes

Novel: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

Goal(s): The goals of this in-class assignment are as follows:

1. To compile all work that was completed throughout the unit.

2. To demonstrate the growth of understanding throughout the unit.

3. To reflect on the learning objectives and knowledge gained throughout the unit.

Standards: The English Language Arts/Literacy Common Core State Standards achieved are:

1. W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

2. W.9-10.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Necessary Material(s): Google Drive
Microsoft Word/Word Processing Software
All assignments and writings completed throughout the unit

Material to be Taught: Reflecting on Writing

Activity: Portfolio Assessment

1. Ask students to begin gathering all of the assignments and writings that they have completed throughout the duration of the unit.
   a. Have them place all files into a Google Drive folder.
   b. Give students a list of all work that is expected to be included in the Portfolio.
   c. This portion of class should take 10-15 minutes.

2. Allow students an additional 15-20 minutes to look through the work they have completed during the unit and draw reflections on the material they have learned.

3. Use the duration of the class meeting for students to write a short reflection on what they gathered from reviewing the work they have completed. Provide students with various prompts to guide their responses:
   a. What have you learned throughout this unit?
   b. What stereotypes were you able to better understand and deconstruct following your reading of The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian?
   c. How do you think your writing has progressed throughout the unit?
   d. How do you plan to further explore some of the topics that were discussed throughout this unit in the future?

4. Once the short reflection is complete, have students add the document into their Google Drive folder and submit electronically.

5. Provide electronic comments and detailed feedback in addition to a formal grade to all students within a week of submitting their Portfolio.

Teacher Prep:

1. Prepare a document that lists all files that should be included in the Portfolio.

2. Prepare a document that provides a description for the Reflection Assignment, including sample prompts and required formatting guidelines.

3. Prepare a document (written or multi-modal) that provides detailed instructions on creating the Portfolio, how to title each of the documents, and how to submit the completed Portfolio.

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Nadia Kalman and Christine Woods

From Windows to Mirrors: Curating, Contextualizing, and Teaching World Literature on Relevant Issues

Abstract

Contemporary world literature has the potential to engage students in meaningful discussion of relevant global issues, but it is difficult to find and contextualize. The not-for-profit organization Words Without Borders is attempting to bridge these gaps with a free classroom resource, WWB Campus (wwb-campus.org), featuring curated literature and contextual resources. After a brief discussion of the history and goals of WWB Campus, provided by its editor, an adjunct professor of English at Virginia Western Community College describes her methods in using this resource to facilitate students' understanding of relevant, controversial topics.

Toward Meaningful, Global Literature: Finding Words Without Borders Campus

About a year ago, I was conducting online research in the hopes of finding some pieces of international literature in an attempt to take my students, ages seventeen and older, out of their own heads, city, and country. I had become increasingly disappointed in the frequency of either misinformation on or lack of understanding about the critical events in world news. My classroom texts have some dated international pieces and I struggled to supplement with what I could find randomly online, until I found Words Without Borders Campus, *wwb-campus.org*, I couldn't believe my luck in, first of all, finding exactly what I was looking for, and secondly, for the online magazine to be such a self-contained, plentiful resource. Along with the literature, there are videos of author interviews as well as links to further reading on the topics covered in the selection, and even more literature. Exposure not only to the issues our world is facing, but the people, culture, and writings, allows a type of relevant and vital understanding of some of the more controversial issues humans can face.

From WWB Campus: Why World Literature?

Cynthia, a New York City community college student, commented in an interview during program pilots, "I've always found authors from other places very interesting …in particular from Mexico, since that's where my family's from. And the fact that, today, we were learning about a Mexican author, I was just all ears." For students like Cynthia, this literature affirms that the experiences, cultures, and language she brings to the classroom are valuable.

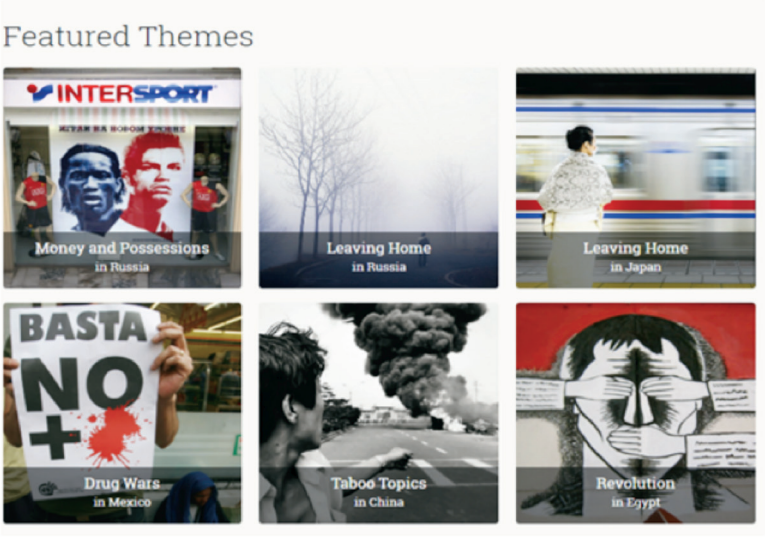
However, world literature is more than a mirror of a particular culture. In an interconnected world, global literature is relevant to all students, not only those with a direct personal connection to a particular culture. Cynthia's class was reading a Mexican poem about the

drug wars — internecine conflicts that involve governments, criminals, and ordinary people across myriad nations. The poem describes a global crisis, which people everywhere will need to understand if there is to be a solution.

Global literature offers students the chance to be part of a worldwide conversation about the most important issues and controversies of our day. Students are eager for this kind of encounter: in a 2015 WWB Campus survey of several hundred geographically dispersed high school and college students, 98% wanted to read more international literature in class. However, when we asked those students about their prior experiences with world literature, the majority reported having only previously read only one or two works in class, at most, in all their years of schooling up until that point. WWB Campus was founded to help bridge this gap making global literature freely available online, alongside multimedia contextual resources and teaching suggestions.

Curating and Contextualizing for Relevance

To select literature for the website, we take a two-pronged approach, seeking literature that depicts common young-adult experiences such as first love and evolving family relationships, as well as texts that take on pressing and significant world issues such as the environment, free speech, migration and immigration. We organize the literature into themes that encompass both the personal and the political.



Words Without Borders (2018) homepage, listing Featured Themes, https://www.wwb-campus.org/.

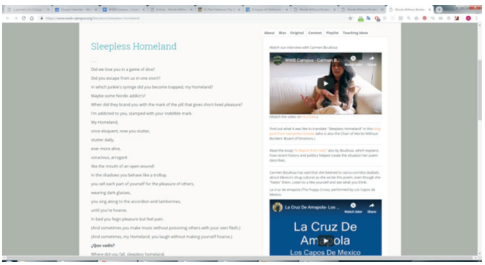
As one might imagine, discussions of such works can become heated. (It may be that the more powerfully relevant the literature, the more potentially controversial it becomes.) We do not believe in shying away from controversy, but in helping students access information that grounds their passion in facts. To this end, we curate substantial and substantiated informational resources: maps, video interviews, timelines, oral histories, photo essays, sound recordings, and primary sources of all kinds. We also write teaching suggestions that emphasize critical engagement with texts, such as inquiries into which voices and perspectives are being represented -- and not.

We try to offer students many potential "ways in" to the literature, and many ways to continue exploring once their interest has been piqued. Until we see them being used in the classroom, however, we have no way of knowing which resources students will seize upon, or what connections they might make between the literature, their lives, and our shared world. -- Nadia Kalman, Editor & Curriculum Designer, Words Without Borders Campus (wwb-campus.org)

Global Literature in the Classroom: Methods

Many controversial issues have been prevalent in the news these days, especially with the availability of news spread through mediums such as social media. Often, students will glean much of what they know about world events and politics from reposted news bites that may or may not have originated from a reliable source, but seem valid due to the number of reposts or comments that follow. One such topic that has been quite in the news this year is that of the immigration situation our country is facing. I was delighted to find the wealth of first-hand information available on WWB Campus through varied resources on Mexico to bring the real-life experiences of immigrants and their struggles into our classroom.

Through reading the poem "Sleepless Homeland" and bio info on the author Carmen Boullosa linked in a video, students get to see inside her home and homeland through her words, photograph, music, and of course her literature.



Words Without Borders. (2018). Page featuring Carmen Boullosa's "Sleepless Homeland," with Context tab selected on the right-hand side. Retrieved from https://www.wwb-campus.org/literature/sleepless-homeland

Students are allowed to hear from a contemporary poet who represents the viewpoint of a woman who very much loves her country but does not love what is happening there at the moment due to the drug wars in which Mexico is embroiled. Students can identify with her feelings through her poetry and her expressions as she relates powerful emotions through her words and what inspired them.

One student mentioned, "I knew there was corruption even in our government, but I can't believe how large a scale it is in Mexico like Ms. Boullosa says." Another student, whose parents immigrated from Mexico, mentioned that he knew about the severity of the violence and dangers the drug wars were presenting for people in Mexico "through Spanish television networks, not American." As we read about the disappearance of the forty-three students from the Ayotzinapa Normal School, he also knew about this, but no one else in class had. Students were appalled upon hearing that nothing was ever done about this crime. Even though some aspects of the realities of it all might need to be presented with sensitivity, Ms. Boullosa's poetry and description of the pain many in her country are experiencing are important stories for all to learn.

It should be noted that prior to intense discussions with students, it is essential as well as productive to establish certain rules for discourse with the students. As suggested in research by Burkstrand-Reid (2011) on teaching controversial topics, "Discussions of difficult topics will go more smoothly if the professor and students have established an environment of trust and mutual respect over the course of the semester" (p. 679). Students need to feel a sense of security and openness with the teacher and the students in order to fully immerse themselves in a topic and take risks on discussing personal or emotional connections with material or concepts. Often, students have either experienced an issue being discussed or know someone who has, like immigration rights or drug addiction which are presented in WWB Campus' section on Mexico. Therefore, certain ground rules on opinion versus empathy need to be established. Nationally recognized educator Cris Tovani agrees, stating, "I try to create a safe environment where students trust their peers, themselves, and me enough to take risks" (p. 51). One of the most beneficial aspects of asking students to join a compassionate conversation with each other and the adult in the classroom on controversial, global issues is that they can be simultaneously protected and empowered by the opportunity to have an informed, acknowledged voice on these topics in a secure space.

Methods I utilize to accomplish intellectual or emotional risk-taking behaviors with my students are: knowing my students via frequent journaling or assignments where I respond to them quickly and thoughtfully, acknowledging their successes by catching them doing something good, making sure I model humor and humility with learning challenges and successes, and by being the ultimate moderator during discussions to maintain fairness and

control. By frequently reading from my students, I learn what is on their minds, how they feel about a variety of issues, and where they might like to be featured or not featured in class discussions. Further, being sure I show my vulnerability and modesty in my personal quest for knowledge lets students see me as an partner in the learning, not just the conveyor of information. Finally, taking control over the discussion in a firm, fair, and consistent manner allows students to know I will be the one to encourage positive participating or dissuade any serious issues or conflicts that may arise.

This becomes particularly useful when students expressed their initial opinions on a topic. For example, our classroom discussion on Mexico began with students expressing certain anti-immigration sentiments from family members or the media. Students later realized those sources had not presented a complete picture of the struggles being faced in Mexico. During a discussion on immigration and drug trafficking potentially coming from Mexico, a few students became uncomfortable due to their or their family's immigrant status. I intervened in the conversation to remind all students that certain individuals do not represent a whole country or culture, but that every individual has a right to be heard whether or not we agree or disagree with a particular opinion. Having these discussions about real issues they and their families live, demonstrates for students the relevance of world literature and resources from WWB Campus as more than just merely useful for completing a class assignment. This literature becomes part of how they and their classmates understand their place in our increasingly connected global community.

The WWB Campus literature is so rich, realistic, and compelling, the need to foster compassion and empathy for such critical challenges worldwide is more than evident. Young adults often become preoccupied with what is right in front of them, namely phones or computers, but can be remarkably determined when they feel a connection to a cause. Through literature that presents something controversial, "students will be given the opportunity to create their own ideas of right and wrong" and hopefully "allow students to modify their ideas about a certain topic" (Brooks, 2010). Further, by creating opportunity through literature to learn about themselves through the experiences of others from carefully selected, reliable sources, students may find a greater purpose.

I observed that students increasingly approached sensitive topics much more open-mindedly, allowing for other opinions in the midst of their own discussions of topics as well as during comments from others. One student mentioned, "I knew but didn't really understand how much the people in the news had families and dreams just like we do." Others readily agreed with their classmates and Ms. Boullosa that something had to be done. Questions were raised like, "What would I have done if that was my life?" My hope and as some research suggests, "'Engaging in controversial issues makes students more aware of the world around

them, and they are more inclined to engage in civic participation, interpersonal skills, content understanding, and political activity'" (Misco, 2011, as cited in Brooks, 2010). There is not a much more important learning goal than inspiring informed students to listen to, consider the welfare of, and act on behalf of their fellow man right at home or abroad.

Having an online, free resource like WWB Campus with international literature, video links, and teacher resources on issues of massive importance in our world is not just convenient, it is critical. Being able to feel the emotions present in the people and the images from the countries represented like love in Japan or gender rights in Russia, allows teachers and students the chance to discuss and debate universal issues as they happen. Students benefit tremendously by being able to realize not just from an outsider's perspective what is happening, but as a fellow human being whose issues are mirrored in their own lives in so many ways. WWB Campus is an invaluable resource for presenting necessary, pertinent literature on world cultures and shared issues to help students become well-informed, compassionate, global citizens of our shared world.

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"Empowerment"

SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO VEJ'S SUMMER 2019 ISSUE

Motivation and learning matters (Jones, 2009), and for the next five issues, I invite you to consider motivation and learning as it applies to your English language arts curriculum. For this first issue, share how you design curriculum in such a way that empowers students to become invested in their learning.

Like us, our students need autonomy. As English teachers, we can provide this through choice and giving students some control in the classroom. In order to be effective, we know that choice needs to be limited and reasonable. In the context of choice, there are ways to encourage students to tap into place (Azano, 2011), with opportunities to meaningfully tie the curriculum to the realities in students' lives. Place-based pedagogy can also work to empower students. What have you found empowers students?

- How have you incorporated place-based pedagogy into your units?
- What are some ways you've structured your curriculum to empower students?
- When have you seen your students "on fire" for their work? What have you found ignites that fire for students?
- What specific topics for applying the 5 C's of creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship resulted in meaningful work and dynamic end-results?
- How have you involved students in helping to develop criteria by which an assignment will be evaluated?
- Either as a class or individually, how have you let students make decisions regarding specific works of literature to be read? What were the results of providing students with this autonomy in the classroom?

This issue of the *Virginia English Journal* will contain three types of articles, described below:

Feature articles: These are longer articles of 3,000 to 5,000 words that blend research and practice, providing educators with theoretical understandings as well as practitioner-friendly ideas.

Great teaching ideas: Shorter articles of 1,000 to 2,000 words that focus on effective and innovative teaching practices that other educators can quickly put into action in their classes.

Promising young scholars: This section is designed for English and English education majors interested in sharing their ideas with an audience of fellow educators. Articles in this section should blend research-based insights with practical suggestions for application and share unique perspectives on English instruction.

Submission deadline: May 1st, 2019

To submit a manuscript, email editor Jenny Martin at jmmartin@bridgewater.edu with the following documents attached:

1) Title Page, including: a. manuscript title, b. author's name, c. correspondence info: address, email, phone number, d. a brief bio: indicating affiliation, recent publications, e. a 100-200 word abstract

2) Blinded Manuscript. Do not include any identifying information in your manuscript document or in the document file name. Replace author identification with "Author" or "Author A," etc. Please make sure your abstract is also included in this document. Please include tables and/or charts in the manuscript.

Other Submission Information:
Submissions must be in MS word and follow the style outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2009, 6th edition).

Once a manuscript has been received, the editor will determine if the piece will be sent out for review. All manuscripts chosen for review are read by a minimum of two reviewers. VEJ will attempt to reach a decision on each article within three months.

References

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