

8th Grade Unit Plan

Social Injustice

Texts: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas

Common Core Standards

Reading:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.6** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
 - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4a** Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Writing:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
 - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2a** Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2b** Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.5** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 [here](#).)
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Unit Overview

During this Unit, students will be exploring the “Social Injustice” theme by reading the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas. This is an in depth look at the life of a slave and prominent leader in the abolishment of slavery in the United States. The students will be making connections between the literature we read in class as well as the social injustices that have happened throughout history. They will then be creating their own website using weebly and choosing a social injustice issue to research and inform the class about. This will be a unit long writing activity. Grammar and vocabulary will also be largely focused on throughout this unit, due to the broad vocabulary used throughout their text and to meet the common core standards for literacy and grammar. The assessment of the unit will be composed of 3 quizzes to check reading comprehension, and one final essay as well as their website project. Multimedia will be used heavily throughout this unit to look at past events and hear from historians and survivors of social injustice.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to identify new vocabulary terms and use them in their writing. Students will understand social injustice and be able to provide examples where it has been found throughout history as well as locate examples from the news or other media sources on where it is happening now. They will be able to hold discussions on social injustice issues and discuss prominent figures in the change of these issues. They will be able to effectively use media and the internet to research a historical topic and design a website to inform on that topic.

Identifying Big Ideas:

- Many things lead to social injustices, including people, ideas, actions, and words.
- Throughout history the things that have changed these injustices are people, ideas, actions and words.
- Social Injustice can be seen everywhere, including the media, our neighborhoods, homes, schools, churches etc.
- Knowing the injustice issues that people have suffered in the past can teach us what mistakes to avoid making in the future. It can show us the negative impact it can have on society.

Essential Questions:

1. What things lead to social injustice?
2. What things have been done to change this?
3. Where do you see social injustice in your everyday life?
4. How does learning about the past affect your future?

Pre-Unit Activity

Deck of Cards Game (Hearts are segregated)

My pre-unit activity is a way to get my students in the mind-set of the very deep, emotional unit that they will be learning about. As each student walks in the class they will pick a card from a deck of cards in my hand. If they choose hearts, they will be asked to sit on one side of the room, away from everyone else. They will not be allotted resources or be able to ask questions. The other students will be given scenarios on how to treat the “hearts” throughout the class period. The goal is to help them understand that you cannot determine what kind of hand you get dealt in life. But, segregation and prejudice is real and alive as well as unjust and unfair. We will then be watching a short video on segregation throughout history to open their eyes and get them excited about the texts they will be reading. Where do you see segregation in your life? Exit Slip short writing.

Assessments

Throughout the Unit, 3 quizzes will be given to indentify comprehension level. The quizzes will relate directly to the text that they have read. They will also be taking a final exam at the end of the unit to summarize what they have learned and what we have discussed. Lastly, they will be creating their own social injustice website using Weebly, as their writing assessment for the unit. This will be a comprehensive grade, with several due dates and checkpoints throughout the course of the unit.

Unit Activities

1. Daily Warm Up Activities

Each day the students will come in and they will be asked to answer a daily SPARK! This SPARK! Will be written on the board and they will write it in their

grammar journals. The SPARK! will either include a spelling and grammar question or a vocabulary question.

* There will be music playing each day as the students come in and they answer their spark question in their journals. This will be routine if successful. This should give them a task to work on and a reason to get settled into class.

*I will then discuss the daily agenda written on the board and we will discuss the answer to the SPARK! Question.

* This will not be a graded assessment, specifically a class starter to get them focused and settled.

2. Grammar Journals

Compare and contrast the qualities of these two groups by completing the following tasks:

1. Venn Diagram:

* Use the word bank provided to sort the words into the appropriate categories.

* Add at least three more words of your own to the “both” category and underline them.

* Add at least six more words to either or both of the “Greaser only” and “Soc only” categories and underline them.

2. Analyze the Venn diagram and write a complete paragraph that summarizes it.

3. Multi Media Discovery Students will be researching their own media source that is a great example of an educational media source on a historical event or social injustice. They will be telling me why it is a good source and showing me what types of things it includes that make it great. These sources can be any of the following:

* Website

* Blog

* Powerpoint

* Magazine

* Youtube video

* Documentary

4. Create My Own Website

Goal: To create a website that informs others about your social justice topic.

Requirements:

- A visually pleasing home page with an interesting introduction to research and website.
- A descriptive timeline that covers 10-12 of the most important events involved with your topic.
- A historical essay that answers an intriguing research question.
- A review of reliable websites that cover important information about your topic.
- A photo page with 7-10 photos and original captions.

Process: You will be using the website weebly.com to create your original website.

5. Reading Comprehension Groups

Read 2 chapters per week tentatively. Read aloud first several pages and then have them read individually. This will be discussion based with the reading comprehension worksheets to guide in reading. This will be done as a class, in a group, in partners and occasionally alone. Due to the higher order of thinking that this text requires, it will be necessary to work as a whole as opposed to doing more individual work.

6. Close Reading

The students will be asked to pick a chapter that they are currently reading and close read it using the 6 steps that they learned in Unit 1. This will be a modified version of the article close reading they have done previously. For example page 42, paragraph 3, instead of numbering each paragraph. Summarizing the paragraphs and stating what the author is saying and doing will be the main focus of this lesson.

7. Act It Out

In groups, choose your favorite scene from the book. Assign parts, use props, write a script and act it out to the class using the details the text provides you. This could include a ‘What happens next?’ play, or a rewrite the ending play.

Jobs in the group will include:

- Writer
- Director
- Props Coordinator
- Costume Designer
- Actors/Actresses

8. Real World Application

The final assignment will be an essay asking the students to find an article that relates to their text in some way. This can be a magazine article, or a newspaper article or from an online periodical. The article could address such issues as bullying, gang activity, underage drinking, vandalism, juvenile delinquency, child abuse, neglect etc. They will be writing an essay explaining how their text ties into real life and how real life ties into their text. They should use their vocabulary terms and the things they examined in their discussion groups during close reading.