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The Story In The Standards: Creating Counter-Narratives in the Common Core State Standards

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THE STORY IN THE STANDARDS: EXAMINING THE META-NARRATIVES AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES IN THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

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A Dissertation In Practice Submitted to The Graduate School at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Practice

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Culturally Relevant Teaching That Works!

STRATEGIES THAT WORK IN THE 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

Grades 6-12

3 Jarret A. Smith, Sr.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

They say no man is an island. Those words have never been truer than going through this process. First, I would like to thank God from whom all blessings flow. I would like to thank my family, my wife and children who kept me sane these past few years. Thanks to my friends and colleagues for words of encouragement and for being a sounding board for my ideas. I definitely want to thank the College of Education at University of Missouri-St. Louis, particularly Dr. Song, for continuing to have faith in me, Dr. Singer for being what we all needed when we were about to pull our hair out, and Dr. Rogers for challenging my thinking and setting me up for success in your classes. I would be remiss if I didn’t thank all of the other professors that taught courses in the Literacy, Language, and Culture cohort.
INTRODUCTION

In the National Commission on Excellence in Education’s *A Nation At Risk*, published in 1983, educators were panned for making more efforts to provide equitable education for all rather than increasing the rigor of academic standards and achievement. For the next 18 years, education was dominated with increasing rigor in schools through standards and assessment (Wallender, 2014), and by 2001, American education was ripe for the implementation of No Child Left Behind. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) detailed guidelines and standards for schools to meet, which determined if they made Annual Yearly Progress. States were able to create their own system of accountability to meet the standards of NCLB. Disparities in the rigor of the states’ systems caused havoc for students who moved from one state to another, going from proficient to basic, or visa versa, in the blink of an eye (Wallender, 2014). This gap in expectations renewed discussions among politicians and think tanks about the need for a national set of standards. Both researchers and educators noted that state standards were allowing for a gap between secondary education and readiness for the postsecondary world, whether in college or the workplace (Wallander, 2014).

It was in this environment that the National Governor’s Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, with backing by organizations like the Gates Foundation and the American
Legislative Exchange Council, created the team of writers that shaped the Common Core State Standards (Taubman, 2014). In 2010, the Common Core Standards were introduced. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of academic expectations in English-Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics that define knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each grade level in order to be on track for success in college and career. These were the focus of the standards with the idea that math and English were the foundations needed to be successful in all other content areas (Wallender, 2014). The mission of the Common Core State Standards Initiative was to provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students were expected to learn while raising the achievement bar to a level comparable to those of the best educational systems in the world (Conley, 2011).

Researchers and scholars began to look deeper into the Common Core Standards and the assessments that accompanied them—the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). These scholars noted three concerns: the process by which the Standards were developed, the assessments that are being implemented at the sites, and the heavy Federal influence on schools (Ryick, 2014). Critics have been vocal about the influence non-
educators have had on the creation and the implementation of the Standards, particularly Bill Gates and the authors of the Standards. Gates has been criticized for his role in developing and expediting the adoption of the Standards (Ryick, 2014) and his attempts to privatize public education through the use of third party vendors (Brass, 2014; Burch, 2014). These vendors are the creators of the tests, products and services that are aligned with the Standards, creating a single market throughout all 50 states (Brass, 2014). While the Standards state that school districts, teachers and states have the authority to determine “how” the students learn, the promotion of CCSS-aligned prepackaged materials have positioned states, districts and schools as consumers of these tests, technologies and services (Brass, 2014).

The authors of the Common Core Standards have come under fire for their lack of classroom experience and for their association with the standardized testing companies. In fact, all 15 of the authors in the CCSS ELA work group, all of whom are white, have some affiliation with testing companies (ACT, College Board, Achieve, Pearson, PARCC) and only five of the 15 individuals have classroom experience teaching English, leading to the belief that the CCSS were developed for assessment purposes, excluding the personal, social, and political dimensions of language and literacy that cannot be represented in measurable terms (Brass, 2014).

These concerns about the Standards raise an even bigger question: What are the implications of
the Common Core State Standards for diversity and fairness in education? How can a group of white professionals craft national standards that empower and value minority students, particularly students of color? And finally, how can teachers with no background or training in multicultural literacy be expected to teach students of color in a way that values their background and prior experiences?

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) put emphasis on the results, as opposed to the means of reaching those results. The CCSS explicitly say that states, districts and teachers are free to use whatever instructional means necessary to achieve the fulfillment of the standards. With the liberty to adjust their pedagogy styles, teachers should have the option to utilize flexibility within the parameters of Common Core. This way of teaching requires a paradigm shift that will challenge educators to think differently and put away teaching boundaries that have held them captive for over 10 years, while considering the various needs of students—academically and culturally. And that sounds really good in theory.

In reality, America is a racialized society that includes a racialized education system (Tatum & Muhammad, 2012; Wallender, 2014). It is within this racialized system that the Common Core State Standards exist. It is within this racialized education system that states and teachers and curriculum developers are given free reign to operate. And it is within this racialized system that we continue to go on the merry-go-round of education reforms shaped by
assumptions about teaching and learning (Taubman, 2014). Leonardo (2014) states that educators are not confronting the ideologies responsible for unequal treatment between groups of students, thus addressing the symptoms of academic failure while leaving the structural origins unchallenged, hence the need for this book.
WHY THIS BOOK IS NECESSARY

As an educator of 17 years, including tenures as a teacher, an assistant principal and an instructional facilitator, I have seen the “achievement gap” widen over the course of the last decade and a half. This timeframe includes transitions to and through Show-Me-Standards, Grade Level Expectations, and now Common Core State Standards. The commonality among these initiatives was their ambitious desire to close the achievement gap, although the authors never address the ultimate cause of the achievement gap, systemic racism and poverty (Compton-Lilly, 2013). The very term achievement gap suggests that the problem resides with the students as opposed to the school system and curriculum as the source of the gap (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Scholars have focused on the culture mismatch that contribute to the gap. Ladson-Billings goes on to say that the pedagogical practices of teacher, as well as the standards used to guide those pedagogical practices, contribute to either the exacerbation or the narrowing of the gap. The purpose of this book is to address these pedagogical practices. It would be impossible to address everything in one text, so this text is focused on the use of counter-narratives and culturally relevant pedagogy.

The Failure of Common Core
In order to understand why counter-narratives and culturally relevant pedagogy are important to students’ of color academic success, we have to first understand the historical context within which these pedagogical practices reside. Two sources of text were transcribed for this particular analysis: Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts 6-12, specifically the Reading Standards for Literature Grade 6-12 (Common Core State Standards, 2010, p. 38). I narrowed the focus even further to only include the standards for grades 9-10. Although I focused on the first two standards, the findings are indicative of the standards as a whole. Text was also transcribed from the key design considerations (Common Core State Standards, 2010, p.4). Transcription was done verbatim and then segmented by clause (Appendix A & B).

The text exemplars and the performance tasks exemplars in Appendix B (Common Core Standards Appendix B, 2010, p.10, 121) were also closely examined. The Appendix was examined looking at the number of texts that feature underrepresented groups, are written by cultural insiders, or show underrepresented groups’ perspective on history or the present that places the social critique at the forefront (Ladson-Billings, 2000).

I transcribed all ten standards under Reading Standards for Literature 6-12 for grades 9-10, but I only analyzed the first two standards. I began the analysis by identifying the language in the text to see how the actual words sets up the relationship between the participants acting and interacting. I analyzed how the text
was interpreted and received and
what social effects they have. Using
Fairclough’s model, I looked at the
three dimensions of this discursive
event:

1) it includes a spoken or written text
2) it is an instance of discourse practice (the distribution and consumption of a text),
3) and it is a piece of social practice (Johnson, 2014).

I was interested in discovering how
the text informed educational
practitioners on creating curriculum
that emphasized cultural diversity. I
organized the transcript in the
categories of genre, discourse and
style. I defined genre as the ways of acting and interacting in discourse.

Discourses were defined as ways of representing in discourse, and style
was identified as ways of being in discourse.

Common Core State Standards revealed that the standards are
written in such a way that students
are not invited to draw on their own experiences and cultural knowledge
when looking at and analyzing text.

The standards are designed to create instances of text-to-text
interpretations and analysis without valuing what the reader brings to the
dynamic. Meaning is situated in the
text rather than in the students and
their communities. This is
problematic because meaning is not ready-made and residing neither in
the text alone nor in the reader alone,
but meaning comes from the dynamic or transaction between the text and
the reader (Rosenblatt, 2004).

Particularly Appendix B and a
portion of the Key Design
Considerations reveal that culturally
relevant pedagogy, instruction that
does invite students of color to bring
their funds of knowledge to the text, is
not present nor is it encouraged. The narrative of the standards is that educators are to use their best experience and judgment in creating the curriculum. Wiggins, Follo, and Eberly (2007) stated that the biggest population entering the teaching profession, young, white, middle-class females, are not equipped to effectively teach students of color without an immersive experience into the culture of urban education.

**Cultural Background Devalued**

The first two standards of Reading Standards for Literature, comprising eight lines of text were analyzed. Three lines (lines 2, 7, and 8) describe text structure as the focal point of analysis. Line 2 of Appendix A asks students to support analysis of the text says explicitly. The text and how it is structured is made the object of focus, dismissing the ways of knowing, being and thinking that the student brings to the analysis. The word explicitly makes it apparent that the text-to-text connection is the only connection that is worthy of consideration. Line 7 furthers this narrative by asking students to determine a theme of a text by using the specific details from the same text. Similar to the word explicitly, the phrase specific details in line 7 (Appendix A) once again asks students to look at the text as the only source as opposed to examining the different questions and reactions that they, the students, bring to the text (Compton-Lilly, 2013). The messages that students take from the text are also not taken into consideration. This is illustrated in the phrasing of line 8 (Appendix A) when students are asked to provide an objective summary of the text. Students’ ways
of structuring and telling stories (Compton-Lilly, 2013) are not allowed to be showcased because their own ways of knowing and valuing text and the content of the text are dismissed. The reading of the text and the analysis thereof are de-emphasized as a personal act that synchronizes the readers’ experiences and the content of the text.

**Meaning Situated In Text**

Within the two standards that I analyzed, the phrase *the text* was used five times over the eight lines (lines 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8). This example of embedded speech makes the text the important factor, not the reader. Text structures are the focus for making textual meaning while being dismissive of student perspective. Meaning is a human construction that involves multiple ways of being, thinking, and knowing (Compton-Lilly, 2013). The standards privilege the verbatim meanings found in texts over the background of the reader. The standards imply that the author’s intended meaning is the only meaning, or meanings, that the students are allowed to draw upon. There are no ways, with the standards written as is, that students are able to access their own experiences and diverse backgrounds in order to analyze the text. Their experiences are treated as secondary to the text itself.

The text is considered neutral, unaffected by students’ experiences, cultures, and ways of being (Compton-Lilly, 2013), while the color-blindness actually helps to perpetuate the status quo of the privileged class. It is almost impossible to interrogate white privilege and racial and societal inequalities with text that is considered neutral (DeCuir & Dixson,
population is not equipped to teach the populations of students of color that are located within our school systems, especially our urban school districts, who are most negatively affected by the lack of diversity in the standards. The standards do not confront and name educational inequalities. The authors of the Standards, who are considered the authority, do not require teachers to rely on and employ frameworks such as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to instruct students (Appendix B, lines 9-11). The teachers are given the authority to use their professional judgment to provide students whatever tools and knowledge they deem necessary to meet the goals of the Standards. This leads to an examination of the

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**Absence of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy**

Examining the Key Design Considerations in the Introduction of the Common Core State Standards (Appendix C), we see how the authors of the Standards valued the results of the standards over the means to achieve them (Appendix B, lines 2-3). The word *focus* is a contractor that narrows the relevance to simply the results. The teachers are required to ensure that students are able to complete the standards; the means to do so are left up to the teachers, curriculum developers, and the state educational agencies. As stated previously, the majority of the teacher population is not equipped to teach the populations of students of color that are located within our school systems, especially our urban school districts, who are most negatively affected by the lack of diversity in the standards. The standards do not confront and name educational inequalities. The authors of the Standards, who are considered the authority, do not require teachers to rely on and employ frameworks such as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to instruct students (Appendix B, lines 9-11). The teachers are given the authority to use their professional judgment to provide students whatever tools and knowledge they deem necessary to meet the goals of the Standards. This leads to an examination of the

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**Failures of the Common Core**

1. Cultural Background Devalued
2. Meaning Situated Exclusively in Text
3. Absence of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
Examination of the text exemplars reveals that a majority of the texts are written by white authors and have white characters as the focus. Few texts show people of different cultural backgrounds interacting with each other in a meaningful way, and even fewer show people of color confronting and dealing with issues of racism and discrimination. Although not expressly required reading, this literature collection exemplifies the underlying value placed on aspects of literature integral to the CCSS. Additionally, the recommendations have led to the creation of publishers seeking to cash in on package sales to school districts. Publishers of exemplar texts increasingly are including this distinction in book descriptions listed on leading online book-selling websites (e.g., Amazon, 2013a). Online sellers’ purchase-tracking information also highlights de facto adoption of CCSS reading lists. On Amazon, those who view/purchase one CCSS exemplar often go on to purchase many, if not all, of the books on the same list (e.g., Amazon, 2013b). This value placed on the exemplars along with the inability of a large population of America’s teachers to adequately address the needs of students of color can only mean that emphasis will be placed on teachers, whether internally or externally, to use the text exemplars as the texts that teachers use in their classrooms, furthering the status quo.
With those three key findings in our minds, we understand the need for teachers to have a resource that allows them to teach students of color in a way that allows those students to flourish in the classroom. That is where the use of counter-narratives and culturally relevant pedagogy come into play.

**Counter-narratives**

One of the major tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) is counter narratives or storytelling. The use of storytelling helps us understand what life is like for others. It helps to break down stereotypes and racial untruths (Decuir & Dixson, 2004). When educators stick with the status quo or do not make it an intentional practice to include mirror and window stories for all students, they participate in the “othering” of their students. One of the most pervasive factors in terms of literacy education is the lack of images of African Americans in literature. Only 16.9% of transitional books include African American children (Hughes-Hassell, Koehler, & Barkley, 2010).

According to the National Endowment for the Humanities summer reading list, less than 5 percent of 300 recommended books were multicultural (Gangi, 2008). Hall (2006) states “as the adolescent male of color seeks out his social role, he finds no clue of it in textbooks or classroom activities that largely reflect Eurocentric Critical Race Theory sees the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script (Ladson-Billings, 1998).
frameworks and perspectives.” From social studies to the sciences, and from language arts to mathematics, much of the curriculum that students of color are exposed to is short of cultural representation and social relevancy. One reason for this is the educational system does not value contributions that are not part of the dominant culture (Sligh & Connors, 2003).

Students become part of the Others when they are not a part of the majority or the dominant culture. The use of counter narratives is critical to engaging African American students in the curriculum and in the classroom (Tatum, 2005). The use of counter narratives allows African American students to see themselves in the literature they read. One of the privileges of whiteness is the ability to see themselves in literature and text in the classroom setting (Rogers & Mosley, 2008). It is a right white students enjoy that is not enjoyed by nonwhites. Continuing to have literature that showcases characters and images from the dominant culture denies students, both white and African American, from examining themselves. White students aren’t examining themselves because they simply don’t have to, and African Americans aren’t given the opportunity to do so. The lack of that privilege for African Americans can cause them to disengage from the text and additionally from the class.

“Critical race theory sees the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script” (Ladson-Billings, 1998). This script silences the voices of African American when those voices challenge
the dominant culture and power. This attempt at race neutrality stands in direct opposition of racial literacy. Racial literacy is a tool that allows teachers to use race as an instrument to examine and understand racism in America. Rogers & Mosley (2006) stated that race has to be directly addressed rather than ignored. White students, to name and combat racism, can use racial literacy. The use of counter stories, poetry, fiction, parables, etc. are important for educators to help students use their voice. It is not enough to read literature that deals with race and racism. It is imperative to have conversations about race and racism when reading the literature (Rogers & Mosley, 2006). Racial literacy recognizes that race is a social construct designed to maintain a power structure that keeps a certain group of people on the fringes of society (Rogers & Mosley, 2008). It maintains Others as well as a dominant culture. Racial literacy does not allow teachers, 90 percent of whom are white (Rogers & Mosley, 2008), to hide behind their whiteness or use white talk to avoid the discussion of race and racism. Teachers have to become cognizant and intentional about the discussions they have in their classroom around the subject of race and racism. Many teachers avoid the discussion in the presence of mixed company, even in the presence of their students. Teachers may not want to cause their white students to feel uncomfortable and they may not know what to say when confronted by their students of color. The only thing gained by this approach is furthering the mindset of white students that they don’t have to
deal with race. Conversely, it also furthers the notion that their students of color are part of the “other”, the disenfranchised and the looked-over. By employing racial literacy, teachers can engage their students of color, particularly African Americans, by giving them a voice that they may have not previously had.

**Culturally Relevant Pedagogy**

Prior to Gloria Ladson-Billing’s seminal work, many scholars had written about what ails the African American learning community. Works from authors such as Au and Jordan (1981), Cazden and Leggett (1981), and Erickson and Mohatt (1982) illustrated the need to connect students’ learning with their culture. Many of these works were not focused specifically on African Americans, but the tenets and concepts could be applied to African American students.

Ladson-Billings built on the previous mentioned research already in existence and wrote her seminal works such as a book published in 1994, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children* and an article published in 1995, “Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy”.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, or CRP, consists of three main components: (1) Academic achievement, (2) cultural competence, and (3) sociopolitical consciousness. These components have been analyzed both separately and as a group. Milner (2010) does an excellent job of unpacking cultural competence, looking at it from the viewpoint of a white teacher in an urban school and analyzing how that teacher uses cultural competence to build relationships with his students.
and therefore increase student achievement. Traditionally, student achievement for African Americans came at the expense of cultural and psychological well being (Ladson-Billing, 1995). Indeed, cultural competence should be seen as working in concert with student achievement as opposed to being in opposition to it (Payne & Laughter, 2013). Cultural competence is helping students to honor and affirm their own culture while also widening their perspective of other cultures.

Since 1995, the literature of CRP has been adopted and expanded upon by many scholars. One of the common themes in the study of literature surrounding CRP, that is also relevant to this action research study, is that teachers who employ culturally relevant pedagogy set high expectations for their students (Callins, 2006). While many scholars have agreed that having high expectations of student learning is a characteristic of effective teachers of CRP (Brown University, 2003; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nichols, Rupley, & Webb-Johnson, 2000), there are contradictory ideas about what CRP actually looks like in practice. Much of the research on CRP has focused on the lack of preparation of new teachers in teaching culturally relevant material. According to Young (2010), Gay and Howard (2000) lamented, “We seriously doubt that existing pre-service programs are adequately preparing teachers to meet the instructional challenges of ethnically,
racing, socially, and linguistically
diverse students in the 21st century”
(p. 1)” Young’s study at a northeastern
elementary school revealed that
teachers and administrators are still
not clear on how CRP actually looks in
the classroom. An important piece of
literature by Paris (2012) expanded
on Ladson-Billing’s idea of culturally
relevant pedagogy by coining the term
culturally sustaining pedagogy.
Culturally sustaining pedagogy
dictates that educators support young
people in sustaining the cultural
competence of their communities
while also offering access to dominant
cultural competence. Ladson-Billing
(2014) has also refined and expanded
on her own theory by reviewing and,
in some instances, reaffirming other
authors’ views and expansions of her
work.

Themes for Culturally Relevant
Activities

These frameworks started me
on my journey to discovering what
teachers needed in order to reconcile
the inadequacies of the Common Core
State Standards with the needs of
African American students. What
better way to figure out what students
need than to talk to the teachers that
serve them. To begin this process, I
first began with an interest in a
particular area (Seidman, 2013). My
particular interest was in the area of
literacy, specifically looking at what
counter-narratives were classroom
teachers creating to help their African
American students achieve
academically. After doing some
research and looking at various
scholars who had already explored the
topic, as well as my own experiences, I
keyed in on classroom instruction and

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what the impact was to the field of literacy acquisition. To that end, I sought to narrow my focus. This process was completed in part by using what Seidman (2013) describes as determining what’s important to the individual and what they are passionate about as well as what is important to others. I continued defining my own interest and looking at the available research. I developed my interview questions from this scrutiny.

I did not want to choose the easiest path to my participant (Seidman, 2013), so after narrowing my focus, I began looking for teachers who were culturally relevant teaching in their instructional practices. In time, I was led to seven secondary teachers, all of whom had worked or were currently working in a urban high school. Purposeful sampling using typical cases was used in order to re-create a sample of the teaching population. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), approximately 76% of the teacher population in the United States is female and approximately 84% of the teacher population is white. In urban schools, the number of females teachers remains consistent but the number of white teachers drops to roughly 71.5% (NCES). In order to have as close to typical case as possible, I interviewed 5 white females, one black male and one black female. Each step along the way, I wanted to insure that I was carrying out each task well and rightly (Seidman, 2013) so as not to expose my interview subjects to harm. To that end, I made sure each teacher knew exactly what their rights were as an interview subjects as well as the
risks by reviewing the informed consent form. Also, I made sure the teachers were comfortable with being interviewed and were aware that it was strictly voluntary. I approached the interview data prepared to let the interviews breathe and speak for itself (Seidman, 2013). I reviewed the transcripts multiple times looking at what themes and trends emerged in the text. I coded those passages using Dedoose, computer based program. After coding, I categorized the themes that emerged from the interview. These themes sprung up organically from the interview. I did my best to take my own biases out of the equation and just let the text speak for itself. That led to some interesting revelations. One revelation that emerged from the interviews was that the teachers had high expectations for their African American students. There is much research that indicates that white teachers have low expectations for African American students. All of the teachers I spoke with promoted the notion of holding all students, including African American students to high expectations. Ms. Holly*, a white social studies teacher currently working in a suburban high school where her African American student population is roughly 15%, stated that “I have students who are specific non-learners and refuse to learn and I hold them to the same standards as everyone else, if not more. By the end of the year, they were some of my best students.” The other teachers as well in one form or

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I had to teach in such a way that was totally out of context with my teaching style...at the end of that year, I celebrated my best year of teaching.

-Ms. Gavin
another echoed that same sentiment.

Another eye-opener that came out in the interviews was that the teachers I interviewed all signified that they had to change their teaching style in some way in order to help their African American students be successful. Ms. Gavin, a teacher in an urban, high poverty high school where her student population is 100% African American said her biggest success came when she changed her teaching style to accommodate her students’ needs. This was repeated by Mr. Martin who said tweaking his teaching style opened his students up to be comfortable with success.

Throughout the interviews, three major themes emerged that guided the activities in this book. These themes developed as we spoke about successes that the teachers had in teaching their content and engaging their African American. They talked about engaging students by relating the Ferguson issues to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and linking the content to cultural backgrounds of her students.

The three themes are outlined below.

**Students want to share and explore their identity as African Americans**

Students’ cultural perspectives allow them to read with and against the texts they encounter (Morrell & Morrell, 2012). The students in the classrooms of the teachers interviewed all showed high levels of engagement in the class content when they were exposed to activities that allowed them to explore their cultural identities as African Americans. During her interview, Ms. Taylor talked about an activity in her class that required her 9th grade.

> Students learn and share information about themselves that they would not have found out otherwise.
> -Ms. Cormer
students to find a comparable black scientist in the place of a better-known white scientist (see pg. 29). She said learning about scientists they could relate to on some level energized her African American students, and students were sharing their experience with their parents at home! Morrell & Morrell writes that helping out students understand themselves better is one of the most important things we can do as teachers (2012). Another interviewee, Ms. Cormer, reiterated this sentiment. Ms. Cormer is a white female who teaches English in an suburban high school with a large population of African American students. Ms. Cormer uses artwork along with the text *The Warmth of Other Suns* to teach her students about the Great African American Migration (see pg. 36). The students engage in a project where they document their own family’s journey, or migration. **Valuing their identities is important to students**. As we spoke about specific activities that teachers used in their classrooms, it became evident that their African American students wanted their identities to be valued. This was more prevalent in the students who attended urban schools. How students view their identities is culturally constructed (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Students of color, because of the racialized society in which we live, see themselves differently than white students. It is important that teachers help students
see themselves from a different, not a deficit, viewpoint. This promotion of students’ individual and collective identity can help them legitimize their voice in a world that see them in this deficit stance. This was made evident through an activity used by Mr. Martin, an African American music teacher in an urban high school. Mr. Martin used Machiavelli’s *The Prince* to help students understand the lyrics of Tupac Shakur (see pg. 34). Students were able to share their own stories from the themes that arose within the comparison of the text and the lyrics. Teachers create an environment of equitable learning by identifying variations of cultures within a classroom (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011) and reminding students that those differences, those identities that make them who they are, should be valued and not forsaken.

**Students want their own unique voices to be heard**

Allowing students to express themselves in their own way is one of the main tenets of Critical Race Theory. Students provide the ultimate counter-narrative by vocalizing their experiences, cultural practices and ways of knowing which have long been delegitimized (Chang, 2013).

Students struggle, on a daily basis, against structures and institutions that seek to dehumanize and devalue their existence. Students sharing their experiences and ideas give them a voice that they long to express. This was captured in Ms. Vickers’ literature class at an urban high school. Ms.
Vickers was teaching students how to find the central theme in a text, “The Rockpile” by James Baldwin. As a class activity in this unit, students created presentations showcasing the central theme, or the generic truth, in their own lives (see pg. 36). Giving students a voice allows them to share their development and lets others see the world through their eyes.
Lesson in a Box

Your students’ task is to create a self-contained lesson kit about the history of their neighborhood. It can be a person, an organization, an event or a place. Their lesson should include artifacts that teach students about their neighborhood and assignments to assess what the students have taught them. Their kit should include at least four different lessons covering an aspect of their neighborhood. The lessons should be interactive and incorporate technology if possible. The lessons must be typed and the instructions for the lesson should be clear. Make sure your students are clear about what they are asking their audience to do, what product you want them to produce, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Examples:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Photo Essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Newspaper Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Soundtracks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Creative Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Evaluating Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Multi-Media Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Board Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Performances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Artifacts include:**
- Pictures
- Copies of speeches
- Timelines
- Power Points
- Videos
- Interviews

**CCSS:** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

**CRP Theme:** Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans.
Letter to....

In this activity, students are asked to write a letter to a local government official describing something in their lives that the government official has the power to impact and offering solutions to that problem.

1. Ask students to research the local government officials in their neighborhoods (alderperson, mayor, councilperson, sheriff, etc.)
2. Have students determine what issues affect their neighborhood that they would be interested in writing about. Asking people in their neighborhood what they would like to see changed, or they may already have an idea in mind can do this!
3. Have students share their ideas with their classmates. This may jog their memories and allow them to come up with even more ideas.
4. Teach students the conventions and part of a business letter.
5. Using the conventions of writing a business letter, have students write and send their letter to your chosen government official.

CCSS: Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

CRP Theme: Allowing student voices to be heard.
Family Budget

Students live in a variety of circumstances that range from affluent to living below the poverty line. This activity teaches students math skills while also giving them the skills to create and incorporate a family budget.

1. Randomly give students a slip of paper with family profile, including a job, salary, and family structure (spouse, kids, homeowner, renter) on it. Jobs should have a wide range (lawyer, banker, janitor, teacher, construction worker, etc.) as well as the family profiles.
2. Students will calculate their bi-weekly salary and research expenses of items and bills to be paid.
3. Facilitate the creation of a family budget by the students.
4. Write a brief essay comparing and contrasting the budget they created with their own family’s budget.

CCSS: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
• Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning").

CRP Theme: Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
Who’s That Scientist?

This activity teaches students about using credible online sources while at the same time learning about lesser-known minority scientists. Students discover the contributions of scientists who are not spotlighted as often as white scientists and learn more about role models who they have more in common with than the one in their textbooks.

1. Teach students what qualifies as a credible source.
2. Give the students the name of a white scientist.
3. Ask students to look up and research a contemporary scientist of color in the same field and write a short biography on that scientist using credible online resources.

CCSS: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CRP Theme: Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans.
Objectification

The function concept has been described as the biggest factor essential high school mathematics can be structured around. The basic level of the function concept is "function as a process." This activity works on this critical skill.

1. First, give students a table where each row had a different function. Each column had a trait by which the function could be classified as having (or not), such as whether the function was even, odd, increasing, decreasing, continuous, 1-to-1, going through the origin, or satisfied f(a+b) =?f(a)+f(b).

2. After filling in the table with "yes" or "no," students comment how difficult it is to find a single simple property shared by all, or to find a single row that is uniquely defined by any one of its traits. Then guide students in a short discussion around how stereotypes come from people assuming “Everybody in group X having trait Y”.

3. As a follow-up conversation or writing exercise, ask students to investigate this problem: "The expression ‘treating someone as an object’ has negative connotations, because it implies an individual as multi-faceted as a human being can be reduced to a single aspect, such as gender, ethnicity, financial status, sexual orientation, religion or occupation. Would it be just as foolish to say that we know everything about a function or its behavior from one particular classification of it? Why?"

Source: www.tolerance.org

CCSS: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CRP Theme: Allowing student voices to be heard.
Human Timeline

Making connections to the past helps students to connect with their culture. This activity is designed to allow students to make those connections that bridge the past and the present.

1. Students will read “The Leap” by Louise Erdrich. While reading, students will examine and discuss the aspects of linear storytelling and chronology. Students will also learn about telling their own story.

2. Show students examples of timelines in textbooks or on the internet.

3. Have students create their own timelines including dates, photos, etc.

CCSS: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

CRP Theme: Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans. Allowing student voices to be heard.
Ferguson And To Kill A Mockingbird

While reading texts such as To Kill A Mockingbird, there are many connections that can be made to current events. Students are able to connect the text to the lives they live.

Questions to connect the text to Ferguson:

1. Compare and contrast how the justice system failed both Tom Robinson in To Kill A Mockingbird and Mike Brown in Ferguson.

2. How is Jem Finch in To Kill A Mockingbird like the protestors in Ferguson?

3. How was the community of Maycomb and the community of Ferguson complicit in the deaths of Tom Robinson and Mike Jones respectively?

4. Imagine To Kill A Mockingbird took place in 2016. Create social media (Facebook posts, Tweets, Instagram posts, blog posts, etc.) chronicling the events.

CCSS: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CRP Theme: Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans. Allowing student voices to be heard.
From The Prince to The Soldier

Using pop culture in lessons has long been a staple of incorporating culturally relevant teaching into one's practice. In this lesson, students will make comparisons between rap legend Tupac Shakur and Italian author Niccolo Machiavelli.

1. Teacher will guide students through the study of the life and accomplishments of Niccolo Machiavelli and Tupac Shakur and the influence that Machiavelli had on Tupac's album *Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory*.

2. Students will read exerpts from Machiavelli's *The Prince*, making note of his stance on topics such as political power and morality in politics.

3. Students will also read lyrics from songs in Tupac's album *Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory*.

4. Students will compare lyrics from the album with excerpts from the Machiavelli text using a graphic organizer and share their comparisons with the class.

**CCSS:** Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

**CRP Theme:** Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
I Am...Excellence Presentations

Finding their authentic selves is something that the vast majority of teenagers deal with. Teenagers from minority groups deal with this in a unique manner because of the images they are bombarded with about who they should be and who they feel they are internally. This lesson focuses students on determining a “central idea” or theme for their lives.

1. The class will read “The Rockpile” by James Baldwin and students will examine the text for the central idea.

2. Once the class has determined the central idea of the text, they will break off into small groups and find details in the text that supports the emergence and sustenance of that central idea (in other words, how is the central idea brought out to readers and how is it developed throughout the story). Students will share their details with the class.

3. Teacher will guide students in creating a central idea (the generic, unifying truth) for their life.

4. Students will create poster presentations about that central idea of their life. Details from life-events will be included in their poster presentation that explains how that central idea has been developed throughout their lives.

CCSS: 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.

CRP Theme: Allowing student voices to be heard.
Dissecting The Lyrics

This lesson allows students to understand allusions. This lesson works best after the teacher has given instruction on the basics of allusions.

1. Students find and bring into class the lyrics of five of their favorite songs. The song can be from whatever genre the student chooses.

2. Working in groups, students use markers to highlight examples of allusions in the lyrics of the songs.

3. Students pass their lyrics around the group to all other students to check for errors as well as find other allusions they may have missed.

4. Students then use multi-media to create a presentation that illustrates the allusions found in the lyrics and what reference is being alluded to.

CCSS: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CRP Theme: Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
In Their Footsteps

1. Before the lesson begins, the teachers should identify primary sources (enough for each student or pair of students) that pertain to slavery in the United States. Textbooks, online collections, documents from local historical societies or genealogy groups, cemeteries or monuments, and historic homes may be utilized.

2. Students should do a free write about the following: What would cause you to pack up everything and move hundreds of miles from everything you know? What information would you need to help you make your decision?

3. After students have completed the free write, have a class discussion while recording the information in a two-column chart.

4. Explain to students that they will be reading excerpts from *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson and examining artwork by Jacob Lawrence about the Great African American Migration.

5. After reading and analyzing text and artwork, students will then create their own narrative about their family’s journey to their city/neighborhood. Students should talk to family members and friends (particularly older family members) about their migration from the south to the north or even from neighborhood to neighborhood.

6. Students will create a presentation that illustrates what they learned in their research.

Source: www.inmotionaame.org

**CCSS:** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*).

**CRP Theme:** Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans.
Artifact Geometry

1. Students are to bring in an item from home that has some sort of geometric significance. They will have an option to do research on an geometrically significant artifact if they cannot bring one from home. Their teacher should provide an example if possible.

2. The following day, students will work in small groups and share their artifacts. The students create a list of distinguishing features of each artifact.

3. Students will then engage in a discussion about the features of the various artifacts. The teacher will facilitate the discussion so that students will recognize the concept of symmetry.

4. The students will have a reflection activity to complete afterwards. The students should then find an artifact from a culture different from their own that may be similar to the artifact they brought. Students can either write a journal entry comparing the artifacts geometrical similarities and differences, or write a report on their findings.

5. Time permitting, the teacher may also be able to have the students coordinate their patterns and make conclusions based on the graphing patterns.

Source: jwilson.coe.uga.edu

CCSS: Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CRP Theme: Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
Weaving through Math

1. Students will read “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker. Teacher will guide students through discussions about the importance of finding and maintaining a sense of identity and the items the help us preserve our heritage.

2. Teacher will discuss the history of weaving in West Africa or in the Native American tribes such as the Navajo and the importance of symbols.

3. Students will engage in a scavenger hunt around the school campus, finding and chronicling the mathematical names for the shapes/objects found on an index card.

4. Students regroup in the classroom and break off into small groups of 4-5 students.

5. Students will then sort the cards into categories by shapes and describes each shape by its properties to the rest of the class.

6. Students will then identify the possible usage of the patterns and shapes they found (Circle=sun, Square & triangle=house and roof, etc.).

CCSS: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

CRP Theme: Sharing and exploring their identities as African Americans.
Bloodsuckers

1. Students will read “The Feather Pillow” by Horacio Quiroga.

2. The teacher will guide the students in a discussion about parasites and how they travel and their place in the ecological system.

3. Students will research the ecological system in their communities. They will explore and categorize the food chain and they will research what parasites live in their communities.

4. Following this research process, students will write a report about their findings.

CCSS: Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS: Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CRP Theme: Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
Read Between the Lines

It is important that students become self-activists.

1. Read excerpts from *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, particularly those passages that discuss the invisibility of the narrator.

2. Teacher will facilitate a class discussion about whether the narrator was invisible because of society or was his invisibility self-imposed. Students will use details from the text to form conclusions around this argument.

3. Students will break off into groups and discuss ways they feel invisible. This could be because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race or socioeconomic status.

4. Based on the information gained from the discussion about their own invisibility, students will create multi-media presentation highlighting solutions to combat their own invisibility.

**CCSS:** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

**CRP Theme:** Valuing student identities such as age, social class and community.
Further Reading


References


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### Appendix A
Analysis of Reading Standards for Literature 1 & 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza</th>
<th>Analysis using CDA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence</td>
<td><strong>Genre</strong>: Embedded Speech – The text is the important factor, not the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. to <em>support analysis</em> of what <strong>the text</strong> says explicitly</td>
<td><strong>Discourse</strong>: Students’ ways of interacting with text in ways that are easy for them to communicate understanding is devalued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. as well as inferences drawn from <strong>the text</strong>.</td>
<td><strong>Style</strong>: the words “explicitly” and “drawn” are used to situate the power within the text as opposed to the reader and his/her experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Determine a theme or central idea of a <strong>text</strong> and</td>
<td><strong>Genre</strong>: Active verbs are used; repetition and chaining of developing theme; repetition of the word detail creates cohesiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. analyze in detail <em>its</em> development</td>
<td><strong>Discourse</strong>: Text structures are the focus for making textual meaning while dismissive of student perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. including how <em>it</em> emerges and is shaped and</td>
<td><strong>Style</strong>: Use of the words “details” used to keep focus on the text and not the reader; the word “objective” de-emphasizes reading as a personal act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. refined by <em>specific details</em>;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. provide an <em>objective</em> summary of the <strong>text</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
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Appendix B
Analysis of Key Design Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A focus on results rather than means</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Embedded Speech – The means are not important the results are what are most important. The verb focus sets what is relevant, which is results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discourse:</strong> Students’ ways of interacting with text in ways that are easy for them to communicate understanding is devalued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Style:</strong> The power and authority is situated in the results, which is the focus. Instructional strategies (i.e. culturally relevant pedagogy) are de-emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. By emphasizing required achievements,</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Transitive verb “emphasizing” has direct object “required achievements”; nouns “teachers”, “curriculum developers” and “states”; verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. the Standards leave room for teachers,</td>
<td><strong>Discourse:</strong> The Standards (Big S) are the authority. Teachers, curriculum developers, states are given the power to determine how and what material is taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. curriculum developers,</td>
<td><strong>Style:</strong> The discourse sets up the teachers, curriculum developers and states as the experts. The absence of students being mentioned nullifies their experiences and funds of knowledge and silences their voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. and states</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. to determine how those goals should be reached and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. what additional topics should be addressed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Thus, the Standards do not mandate such things</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> Standards are capitalized; “not” modifies mandate; “monitor” and “direct” are direct verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. as a particular writing process</td>
<td><strong>Discourse:</strong> The Standards (Big S) are the authority; modifier “not” indicates there is no particular writing process or metacognitive strategies to be used; process of “monitor” and “direct”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. or the full range of metacognitive strategies</td>
<td><strong>Style:</strong> Does not confront and name educational social inequalities; Authors of the Standards, who are considered the authority, do not require teachers to use strategies such as CRP to instruct students; students are consumers of information, not creators of knowledge, once again de-emphasizing their experiences and backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teachers are thus free to provide students with whatever tools and knowledge</td>
<td><strong>Genre:</strong> “are thus” dialogical expansion; “provide” verb to give; “their” addresses teachers; “most” indicates greatest extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. their professional judgment and experience identify</td>
<td><strong>Discourse:</strong> The Standards (Big S) are the authority; teachers are the experts, their judgment and experience are important factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. as most helpful for meeting the goals</td>
<td><strong>Style:</strong> Does not confront and name educational social inequalities; Authors of the Standards, who are considered the authority, do not require teachers to use strategies such as CRP to instruct students; students are consumers of information, not creators of knowledge, once again de-emphasizing their experiences and backgrounds; students’ experiences are de-emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. set out in the Standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. set out in the Standards.</td>
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</table>
Appendix C
Screenshot of Key Design Considerations

Key Design Considerations

CCR and grade-specific standards

The CCR standards anchor the document and define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students to be prepared for post-secondary and workplace training programs and to succeed. The K–12 grade-specific standards define and evolve expectations and a cumulative progression designed to enable students to meet college and career readiness expectations no later than the end of high school. The CCR and high school (grades 9–12) standards work in tandem to define the college and career readiness line—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity. Hanover both should be considered when developing college and career readiness assessments.

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards, attain or further develop skills and understandings, and exceed or progress toward meeting the more general expectations described by the CCR standards.

Grade levels for K–8: grade bands for 9–10 and 11–12

The Standards use individual grade levels in Kindergarten through grade 8 to provide useful specificity. The Standards are two-year bands in grades 9–12 to allow schools, districts, and states flexibility in high school course design.

A focus on results rather than means

By specifying the required achievement, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and others to determine how those goals should be addressed and what additional topics should be addressed. Thus, the Standards do not mandate such things as a particular writing process or the full range of metacognitive strategies that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning. Teachers are thus free to provide students with whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful for meeting the goals set out in the Standards.

An integrated model of literacy

Although the Standards are divided into Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language strands for conceptual clarity, the processes of communication are closely connected, as reflected throughout this document. For example, Writing standard 1 requires that students be able to write about what they read. Likewise, Speaking and Listening standard 4 sets the expectation that students will share findings from their research.

Research and media skills blended into the Standards as a whole

To be ready for college, workforce training, and life in a technological society, students need the ability to gather, comprehend, evaluate, synthesize, and report on information and ideas; to conduct original research in order to answer questions or solve problems; and to analyze and create a high volume and extensive range of print and nonprint texts in media forms old and new. The need to conduct research and to produce and consume media is embedded into every aspect of today’s curriculum. In this fashion, research and media skills and understandings are embedded throughout the Standards rather than treated in a separate section.

Shared responsibility for students’ literacy development

The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school. The K–5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects, including but not limited to ELA. The grades K–12 standards are divided into two sections: one for ELA and the other for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. This division reflects the unique, time-honored place of ELA teachers in developing students’ literacy skills while at the same time recognizing that teachers in other areas must have a role in this development as well.

Part of the motivation behind the interdisciplinary approach to literacy promulgated by the Standards is extensive research establishing the need for college and career-ready students to be proficient in reading complex informational text independently in a variety of content areas. Most of the required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content. Postsecondary education programs typically provide students with both a higher volume of such reading than is generally required in K–12 schools and comparatively little scaffolding.

The Standards are not aimed at raising a special emphasis on informational text. The 2010 reading frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) requires a high and increasing proportion of informational text on its assessment as students advance through the grades.
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Screenshots of Text Exemplars

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Johnson, James Weldon. “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” ...................................................... 120
Cullen, Countee. “Yet Do I Marvel.” ................................................................................... 120
Auden, Wystan Hugh. “Musée des Beaux Arts.” ................................................................. 120
Walker, Alice. “Women.” ........................................................................................................ 120
Baca, Jimmy Santiago. “I Am Offering This Poem to You.” ............................................. 121
Appendix E
Screenshots of Performance Task Exemplars

Sample Performance Tasks for Stories, Drama, and Poetry

- Students analyze how the character of Odysseus from Homer’s Odyssey—a “man of twists and turns”—reflects conflicting motivations through his interactions with other characters in the epic poem. They articulate how his conflicting loyalties during his long and complicated journey home from the Trojan War both advance the plot of Homer’s epic and develop themes. [RL.9-10.3]

- Students analyze how Michael Shaara in his Civil War novel The Killer Angels creates a sense of tension and even surprise regarding the outcome of events at the Battle of Gettysburg through pacing, ordering of events, and the overarching structure of the novel. [RL.9-10.5]

- Students analyze in detail the theme of relationships between mothers and daughters and how that theme develops over the course of Amy Tan’s The Joy Luck Club. Students search the text for specific details that show how the theme emerges and how it is shaped and refined over the course of the novel. [RL.9-10.2]

- Students analyze how the Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa in his film Throne of Blood draws on and trans-
Appendix F
Transcript of Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Transcriber: Jarret A. Smith
Transcribed: April 10, 2015 (by clause)

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details
9. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence
10. to support analysis of what the text says explicitly
11. as well as inferences drawn from the text.
12. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and
13. analyze in detail its development over the course of the text,
14. including how it emerges and is shaped and
15. refined by specific details;
16. provide an objective summary of the text.
17. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations)
18. develop over the course of a text,
19. interact with other characters, and
20. advance the plot or develop the theme.

Craft and Structure
1. Determine the meaning
2. of words and phrases
3. as they are used in the text,
4. including figurative and connotative meanings;
5. analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone
6. (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
7. Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text,
8. order events within it (e.g., parallel plots),
9. and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks)
10. create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
11. Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience
12. reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States,
13. drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
1. Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene
2. in two different artistic mediums,
3. including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment
4. (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
5. (Not applicable to literature)
6. Analyze how an author
7. draws on and
8. transforms source material in a specific work
9. (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or
10. how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
1. By the end of grade 9,
2. read and comprehend literature,
3. including stories, dramas, and poems,
4. in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently,
5. with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
6. By the end of grade 10,
7. read and comprehend literature,
8. including stories, dramas, and poems,
9. at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.