BLACK LITERATURE
CURRICULUM GUIDE

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Senior High School
Basic English Curriculum
Black Literature Elective

Introduction

The idea of first planning and then presenting a semester's investigation of the black American's literary achievements and contributions to the total fabric of American culture was motivated by these considerations:

First. On the secondary level, at least in the school district for which these units were planned, there is vast, almost universal ignorance on the part of students concerning black authors and their works. This includes even the most modern and controversial writers. Black Like Me, a contrived and white evaluation of a black situation has, for the most part, been their total encounter with "Negro" literature of any depth or length. In short, to teach American literature has been to teach white literature.

Second. The racial confrontation in this country is so vast in its psychological, social and emotional complexities that high school students need a specialized knowledge of the problems facing both black and white communities in order that they, as the country's future leaders, may deal adequately and judiciously with the racial issues presented at the polls, in mass media interpretations and in their daily contacts.
Third. The history of the Negro in North America began in 1519 when a cargo of stolen slaves bound for the West Indies was traded in Jamestown, Virginia for food. Since then, approximately nineteen million black, United States citizens have come to share an American-originated heritage of ignominy and degradation and a history based on the rule of the lash and the chain. In crimes of commission and omission against our maligned brothers we, as educators, are mortally guilty. However, a belated and meager reparation is available to us in the presentation of their history, unbelievable survival and contributions to a nation which has too frequently denied their equality and even, at times, their humanity.
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Methods As Related To Laning X, Y

In an attempt to make it possible for all students, whatever their abilities, to be challenged academically and still achieve success, Fort Wayne schools have initiated laning as a means of ability grouping. Characteristics of the students now enrolled in the high school English lanes, considered in the evaluation of materials for this curriculum, are the following:

**X-Lane Students.** These students are above average in intelligence (C+ or higher I.Q. score), in reading achievement and verbal fluency. They usually have little difficulty in generalizing observations, seeing logical relationships and making a transference. Most of them have experienced constant academic success and are easily motivated.

**Y-Lane Students.** These students are characterized by average intelligence (C or C- I.Q. score), reading achievement with a range of one or two years below to one or two years above present grade level, average verbal abilities, and limited abstract reasoning and organizing abilities. Generally they are less enthusiastic about school work than X-lane students and are difficult to motivate.
GENERAL OBJECTIVES FOR BLACK LITERATURE
SURVEY AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

The students should increase their ability

1. To understand that much literature, black or white, seeks to define man's nature and his relationship to the world. The quest for definition creates a theme of unity that transcends race and culture to accent humanity and form common bonds among all men.

2. To establish criteria by which literature representative of several genres may be judged successfully.

3. To develop, through a study of black literature, a new or deeper knowledge and broader appreciation of the Negro as an artist and spokesman for equality.

4. To investigate, in terms of his own self-awareness, the chronological and historical role of the Negro author.

5. To trace trends in style, theme variation and repetition, and contributions to specific genres by black authors in terms of the expectations and demands of the cultural milieu in which the author lived.

6. To investigate the Negro image in black literature and to trace, chronologically and historically, the development and changes in this image in relationship to the racial attitudes that existed at the time.

7. To investigate literary devices and artistic techniques in conveying the meaning and message that the author desires.

8. To take a literary survey that traces the historical and cultural alienation that has consciously and unconsciously been imposed on the Negro in America.

9. To take a literary survey that traces the trends in Negro protestations and the search for equality.

10. To explore what, for most students, will be a new realm of experience with an open mind and critical detachment.
GENERAL OBJECTIVES (cont.)

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

The students should

1. Learn to deal effectively with their own prejudices and the prejudices of their classmates.

2. Contribute frequently to class discussions and activities.

3. Appreciate the need of others to be heard and listen attentively, especially if the view expressed are different than their own.

4. Defend their viewpoint without strong emotionalism, using textual evidence as the only means of defense.

5. Feel that each response is important to the group.

6. Learn to work efficiently in groups and as individuals in preparing work.

7. Criticize views considered invalid on an impersonal and objective level.

8. Be aware that the investigation of black literature can enlighten their own situation and expand their freedom to determine their own values.

9. Recognize the creation of a literary work of art as an achievement in itself.

10. Recognize that the work done in class is not something apart from their life outside school.

11. Appreciate the value of having a personal philosophy, formed from careful reading, on the racial issues that affect all Americans.

11. Deal effectively and impersonally with controversial material.
OBJECTIVES At the end of these units the students should be able to

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

1. Understand the nature and origins of prejudice in themselves and in their classmates.

2. Recognize prejudice as an instrument or device, not as a natural state of being.

3. Realize the effects of prejudice both on a cultural and personal level.

4. Resolve to limit toleration of prejudice in themselves and work, through discussion and classwork, to limit it in others.

5. Appreciate the role the Negro has played in the development of America.

6. Recognize the injustice of discrimination against fellow citizens who are so much a part of our history.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

1. Obtain a broader knowledge of general American history.

2. Understand the tradition of prejudice in this country and the economic and cultural factors which have fostered it.
BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR PREJUDICE AND HISTORY UNITS

PREJUDICE, Books


PREJUDICE, Films

Black and White Together. National Educational Television. (A study of students in an integrated school.)

Diary of a Harlem Family. National Educational Television. (Filmed by Gordon Parks.)

Everybody's Prejudiced. McGraw Hill.


HISTORY, Books

X-LANE CLASSES


HISTORY, Books

X-LANE CLASSES


Meltzer, Milton. *In Their Own Words: A History of the American Negro.* New York: Crowell Series. (For slow or immature reader only.)


**HISTORY, Films**

*Black History: Lost, Strayed or Stolen.* Central Broadcasting System.

*Color of Man.* Pyramid Films.


UNIT 3
BLACK POETRY

OBJECTIVES. At the end of the unit the students should be able to

COGNITIVE DOMAIN.

1. Account for theme and point of view.
2. Recognize racial idiom in verse form.
3. See common thread of Negro experience in America.
4. See the overwhelming historical, sociological and psychological pressures that the Negro is subjected to and his response to them.
5. Weigh and appraise his responses in terms a critical analysis of the poems studied.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

1. Establish criteria for judging poetry.
2. Broaden insight into poetic techniques and the functioning and usage of literary devices.
BLACK POETRY BIBLIOGRAPHY

The wealth of black poets and the availability of anthologies is so large that the choice of poets for study can be limited only by the needs of the class and time. Our historical and chronological survey of black poets was conducted in terms of the authors' awareness of their own blackness, the oppression of the race, relationship to God, life, love, and death. Poems duplicated from the following bibliography were more than adequate.


POETRY BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


Hughes, Langston. Ask Your Mama: 12 Moods For Jazz.


UNIT 4
BLACK NON-FICTION

OBJECTIVES. At the end of this unit the students should be able to

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

1. Recognize that the voices of Negro leadership has several dimensions and takes several directions.

2. Recognize the shift in attitude on the part of many blacks toward violence or at least the loss of patience and the significance of this trend for all men.

3. Recognize that the men studied have a frame of reference that makes their experiences unique.

4. Realize that the black sees only one solution to the race problem and that is total integration.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

1. Appreciate what is happening in the Negro integration movement by meeting some of its leaders.

2. Recognize that blacks do not have a single, universally recognized leader as yet, and be able to establish, at least in part, why.
BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR NON-FICTION UNIT


Hughes, Lanston. The Big Sea. New York: Knopf, 1940.


UNIT 5
BLACK DRAMA

OBJECTIVES. By the end of this unit the students should be able to

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

1. Understand how the staging of a production is an integral part of a successful performance.

2. Investigate the elements that make a play uniquely dramatic. The lighting, costuming, setting, special effects, etc.

3. Determine if the play presented could have been successful in another form and establish a criteria for judging a play.

4. Recognize the dramatic techniques and devices, especially the use of irony, to obtain the effect the author desires.

5. Compare the themes and style of a playwright with other works that he has published outside the theatre.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

1. Work efficiently in groups to produce, direct, and act out dramatic scenes or an entire play.

2. Broaden their knowledge of black playwrights and black plays.

3. Appreciate, understand and judge theatre presentations more effectively.
BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR BLACK DRAMA

X-LANE CLASSES


Y-LANE CLASSES


UNIT 6
BLACK FICTION

OBJECTIVES. At the end of this unit the students should be able to:

COGNITIVE DOMAIN

1. Recognize the characteristics of heroism as the black author sees them.

2. Find reasons for the exploitation of certain social situations by black authors.

3. Determine, as white readers, what type of characters strengthen the Negro position and what type of characters weaken the author's cause. Determine if the author has considered the white reader.

4. Decide if the black author of fiction answers propaganda with propaganda.

5. Explain the presence or absence of "stock" Negro characters in black fiction.

6. Prove or refute the statement that black authors are regionalists.

7. Discuss the role of the black author as apologist.

8. Discuss chauvinism in black fiction.

9. Discuss characterization, imagery, setting, point of view, narrator role etc. in terms of all the fiction read for this unit.

10. Discuss the effects of certain philosophies such as Romanticism or Realism on a particular author.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

1. Read fiction with greater critical ability.

2. Appreciate authors and works that were previously unknown.

3. Recognize the contributions of the black fiction writer.


Chesnutt, Charles, W. *The Conjure Woman*. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1899. OP. (This is a collection of short stories rather than a novel. However, the difficulty in finding mature, undated black literature from this period makes the addition of this collection almost essential for a chronological survey.)


X-LANE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR FICTION UNIT


TEACHER READING LIST


Addition: