

Making Connections: Reflections of History

Dr. Marlene Gardner

Contents of the curriculum unit:

- **Overview**
 - **Rationale**
 - **Lesson Plans, Objectives, Strategies and Classroom Activities**
 - **Works Cited**
 - **Bibliography**
 - **Appendix**
-

Overview

The concept of making connections is important in both teaching and learning. Teaching often consists of assisting students in finding connections and learning involves making connections among various disciplines and life experiences. The curriculum unit concentrates on an area of interest for mainstream grade seven students, presents information about African-American literature and history using inquiry strategies, and considers the concept of Southern identity in examining sample stories from the oral tradition, with emphasis on supernatural tales.

Rationale

There is a paradoxical and interdependent aspect to culture and literature. Literature is part of the culture that forms it. To understand literature, historical background is necessary. This year, a new initiative which is organized as a block schedule, with ninety minute class periods focusing on an enrichment curriculum, allows for interesting and in-depth analysis of aspects of literature. In this case, enrichment involves an extension of the regular Communications curriculum: responding to literature. The curriculum unit supports the Pittsburgh Public Schools Communications Standards, and the focus is on the reading (Standard 2) and the writing (Standard 4) standards. Citizenship Standards (7 and 8) and the Arts and Humanities Standards (2 and 3) are also involved in the unit. Technology (Standard 9) and internet resources are used to enhance the depth and range of available information. Historical background and information on folklore and culture provides the background for connections students may make between African-American literature and history.

Black Southern writers have produced literature grounded in history and in culture. Although writers have responded to the Southern experience in different ways, history and collective experiences can be found in the oral black tradition (storytelling) and many traditional stories have been recorded. In addition, historical accounts are present in the literature called “slave narratives.” Black Southern literature tends to be autobiographical, dramatic, poetic, and connected to the stories slaves brought from Africa and told as part of an oral history (Killens and Ward 7.) The written word cannot escape oral antecedents as African-American authors focus on the lost homeland, or examine African culture and seek a connection to that culture.

History and Literature

African-American storytellers, along with the majority of American blacks can trace their origin to an area of western Africa that was controlled by three prosperous empires from around 300 BCE to late 1500 CE. Ghana, Mali and Songhai thrived on trade and had efficient governments. Many tribes were represented in these areas. The slave trade, which brought Africans to the European colonies in the Southern United States began in the early 1500s and continued for the next three hundred years (World Book 1.)

While there is little doubt about the beginnings of African-American history and culture in the colonies, there is some dispute concerning *literary* beginnings, in general. For some experts, “literature” refers only to the written word, and literature began as early as 1608 with a promotional pamphlet by Captain John Smith long before statehood had come to the South (Wilson and Ferris 1.) Other works, like A Characterization of the Province of Maryland by George Alsop, an indentured servant, The History of the Present State of Virginia (1705) by Robert Beverley and The Sot Weed Factor (1708) by Ebenezer Cooke indicate the level of publishing in the early days. Early novels, by Arthur Blackamore, were Religion Triumverate and Lucky At Last. Poetry was not neglected, as Samuel Davies wrote and published Miscellaneous Poems in 1752 (Wilson and Ferris 1.) The formal written and published word was not a popular endeavor early on in the South, and if only written works are considered, literature was pretty dull.

In considering only published literary efforts, the Civil War, part of history for all Americans, produced a sub-set of literature. Such literature reflects the loss of a certain way of life for white southerners and it reflects a survival theme for slaves. Marse Chan: A Tale of Old Virginia (Thomas Page, 1884) and more modern novels by William Faulkner, Walker Percy and William Styron are part of the Civil War literary effort. Poetry such as Drum Taps by Walt Whitman and various poems by Henry Timrod reflected wartime, but contemporary diaries such as those published by Sara M. Dawson and Kate Stone told the details (Wilson and Ferris 1.) Most, like A Confederate Girl’s Diary by Mary B. Chestnut, published in 1913, were unknown until long after the war. Humor authors, authors of travelogues and “local color”

authors also wrote during this historical time frame (Reed and Reed 2.) Military memoirs had a place among literary efforts, such as those published by Richard Taylor, John Singleton Moseby and James Longstreet. The romantic mode has long been prevalent in “Civil War” southern literature from Surry of Eagle’s Nest by John Esten Cooke (1866) to The Battle Ground by Ellen Glasgow (1902) to Gone With the Wind by Margaret Mitchell (1936.) There are a few historical battlefield narratives, but Stephen Crane’s The Red Badge of Courage (1895) and The Civil War: A Narrative History by Shelby Foote (1958, 1963, 1974) are good representatives (Wilson and Ferris 3-4.) In spite of all of the energy and ink expended in Civil War literature, there has not actually been a major poem, novel or play derived from this “central crisis in the national existence,” according to some experts (Wilson and Ferris 2.) Yet, this part of our collective past continues to be an area of interest for historians and authors. African-American slaves and former slaves began to tell their stories during this same time period. While the written word seemed to reflect a white southern view, African-American literature was continuing to develop as stories, both from the homeland and the new land, were told and retold.

In the South, African-American literature developed differently, and African-American authors tend to reflect the antecedents of the oral tradition and the condition of slavery. These writers explore the meaning of Africa to the individual and to a collective consciousness. In earlier literature, Africa was viewed as a remembered, lost homeland, but, in more recent literature, a fascination with Africa has progressed and turned into a “cultural reunion”(Olorounto 1.) Southern writing is typified by a sense of history, a sense of place, community, family, religion, race, “a love of storytelling,” and “the Southern grotesque”(Reed and Reed 9.) Although none of these characteristics is unique to the South, taken as a whole, they do seem to describe the focus of southern literature. Southern writing, of course, also reflects the focus of the African-American oral tradition, and African-American writing cannot escape the overpowering element of history: slavery. Through all early literary exploration, and through various genres and literary forms, folk roots and the oral tradition are the ancestors of published African-American writing.

Among African-American authors, if only the formal and published literature is considered, then “literature” began in 1746 with “Bars Fight” by Terry Lucy (Bailey 1), a commemorative poem about the Deerfield Massacre (Harley 31.) Briton Hammond was the first black prose writer with A Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings and Surprising Deliverance of Briton Hammond, A Negro Man in 1760. Historically, the American Revolution tended to reinforce ideas about the importance of written communication, reading, writing and printing as “technologies of power” (McHenry 2), but few literary efforts reflected this time period. No songs or poems of battle survived. Although African-American literature tends to be poetic regardless of form, some southern African-American writers excelled in poetry as time went on. Early forays into the publishing world were poetic reflections of the history of the times and the expectations of the public, and African-American authors wrote and continued to publish the poetry of their times.

After the early poem by Terry Lucy, Jupiter Hammond wrote An Evening Thought, his first volume of poetry, in 1761; his poem, "To Miss Phillis Wheatley" was published in 1778. Phillis Wheatley, who came to the United States as a slave in 1761, was the first African-American to publish a book (McHenry 1). Since poetry was considered to be the highest form of expression at that time, her work was considered to be unusual. The poems illustrated her humanity and called many to question whether slavery was justified. By the time her poetry was published, in 1773, some northern states, like Pennsylvania, had stifled slavery by taxing it heavily, but it flourished in the south. Poetic contributions to literature continued as slave poet George Moses Horton and abolitionist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper were prominent southern voices (Greene 1), reflecting an anti-slavery sentiment. After the Civil War, George McClellan and Joseph Cotter wrote poetry that followed the formal conventions of the times. A less formal work, Naked Genius was published by George Horton (Harley, 153.) In 1877, Albery Whitman published "Not A Man and Yet A Man," reflecting the lingering effects of slavery (Harley 177.) Paul Lawrence Dunbar began publishing poetry in 1893 (Harley 191) and continued with Lyrics of a Lowly Life in 1899 (Bailey 2.) In 1911, George Johnson published The Heart of a Woman (Harley 221.) Poetry continued to reflect the effects of slavery, the times of the authors, and the oral traditions.

In the 1920s, the poetic form was celebrated. In fact, African-American authors "celebrated folk ways but created high art" (Olorounto 4.) Southern African-Americans, like Langston Hughes, The Weary Blues (Bailey, 2) and James Weldon Johnson, The Book of Negro Verse (1922), were dominant voices in the (northern) Harlem Renaissance. Claude McKay published "If We Must Die," a sonnet in response to racial violence and unrest (McHenry 9) in a volume of poetry called Harlem Shadows, and Countee Cullen's Color was published in 1925 (Harley 221.) The use of dialect was refined and the "southern black worldview" was embodied in the poetry (Greene 2.) Of course, dialect was a part of the oral tradition of storytelling. Authors like Jean Toomer and Anne Spencer used a lyrical, poetic style, and natural images of southern origins, autobiographical references and realism in the poetry found in novels (McHenry 8.) Alain Locke defined the Renaissance with The New Negro, a collection of poetry, essays and stories, but, by 1929, the age of African-American poetry was fading in spite of Southern Road, published by Sterling Brown in 1932 (Harley 239.)

From the Harlem Renaissance, where southerners defined northern conditions for African-Americans, through the 1960s, when southern poets defined the winds of change, many African-Americans wrote and published poetry. Sterling Brown, Arna Bontemps, Margaret Walker and Melvin Tolson continued to capture elements of black Folk culture in poetry (Greene 2.) Robert Hayden published Heart Shape in the Dust in 1940 (Harley 247.) Gwendolyn Brooks published A Street in Bronzeville in 1953 (Bailey 2) following Robert Hayden's historical poem "Middle Passage" in 1945 (McHenry 9) and Melvin Tolson's Rendezvous with America in 1944(Harley 255.) In 1950, Gwendolyn Brooks wrote "Annie Allen." "For My People," Margaret Walker's poem from 1942, was reissued in 1968. Nikki Giovanni published Black Feeling, Black Talk in 1968, and 1973 brought Alice Walker's Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems. In 1994, Rita Dove wrote an autobiographical poem about her grandparents, Thomas and Beulah (Bailey 4.) These poetic samples from African-Americans who published their work reflect the historic times, the loss of a homeland and the interest in history found in most Southern authors. These

poems reflect the history of the author, and the poetic nature of African-American writing, stemming from forms found in oral literature is just one form of published writing; African-American literature has a dramatic cast, as well.

Few plays were written by African-American authors before the Harlem Renaissance, but William Wells Brown (1858) and Joseph Cotten (1903) wrote dramatic tracts notable for their historic value. Various musical comedies and minstrel shows of the times reflected popular culture and couldn't actually be called plays (Greene 2.) In 1919, Mary Burrell's play, They That Sit in Darkness, addressed conditions for African-Americans and the issue of birth control (Harley 223.) As an outgrowth of the Harlem Renaissance, Langston Hughes, Hal Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston and Arna Bontemps wrote short plays in the social-realism mode (Greene 2) which reflected growing concerns about life for African-Americans. Most playwrights used music, folklore, religion and social history from the 1930s to the 1960s, but the emphasis moved, as had many southerners, to urban and northern settings (Greene 2.) Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun (1959), with a title that references an earlier poem, exemplifies this idea (McHenry 11) and the idea that the African homeland has meaning (Olorounto 3.) August Wilson, more recently, has continued to echo the historical southern tradition (1987, 1990) (McHenry 13) with Fences, (Bailey 4) although he, and his settings, are "northern."

Since drama is so much a part of other forms of African-American literature, authors may retain the dramatic aspects and reject the formal confines of the play. Historically, plays were not a prevalent literary form, but southern African-American authors have certainly sought self-expression in other ways; the oral traditions of the southern storyteller gave rise to the published short story.

Southerners were the first African-American short story writers in the United States. Short fiction about the slave experience was predominant well past 1900 (Greene 2,) and slave narratives were a source of the stories found in literature. Slave narratives were a separate category of African-American writing; they were expository and apart from the autobiographical short story. Such short stories reflected the history of slavery and the conditions of life for African-Americans.

While northern blacks were writing about racism (David Wilkes' Appeal) (McHenry 3) near the turn of the nineteenth century, Charles Waddell Chestnut incorporated elements of "local color" and "regionality" to develop a classification of short story called "plantation fiction" (Greene 3.) Of course, plantation stories were quite different from those by white writers such as J.P. Kennedy's Swallow Barn (Reed and Reed 5) because African-American writers showed the plantation system in a realistic way. In addition, newspapers were an area where free blacks were able to begin a literary tradition. Anonymity was the rule of the day, so many African-Americans used pen names, and black men and women could submit a wide variety of writing for publication. For example, Anglo African Magazine published "Two Offers" by Frances E. W. Harper in 1861. Another magazine, The Repository of Religion, Literature, Science and Art was started under the auspices of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (McHenry 5.) Joel C. Harris (1880) published Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings (Bailey 2.) These short stories were direct adaptations of African tales from the oral tradition, but they also featured the false image of the "happy slave" along with the wily trickster (Brer

Rabbit.) The years between 1890 and 1910 were both the “woman’s era” and “a time characterized by widespread lynching and segregation” (McHenry 4, 6.) Aside from F. E. W. Harper’s “Shadows Uplifted,” Julia Cooper wrote “A Voice from the South by a Black Woman of the South,” Judy Delaney wrote “Struggles for Freedom” and Zora Neale Hurston continued the female tradition with short stories published in the 1920s.

African-American writers added features reflective of life in the south and features from the oral tradition like the trickster and the double entendre to short stories as they continued in the autobiographical mode. Some authors, like Langston Hughes (Simple Series) and Richard Wright (Uncle Tom’s Children, 1938) wrote short story cycles (Greene 2) with different stories sharing a thematic unity. As time went on, anthologies, like Bloodlines by Ernest Gaines and Elbow Room by James McPherson (Harley 305,331) became popular. In the short story, in the early days and in modern times, Africa was a “point of reference from which history could be accurately analyzed” (Olorunto 5) and short stories carrying elements of the oral tradition formed the basis for much of what was printed. Other writings by African-Americans, of course, carried the same reflections of slavery, the homeland and cultural ideas and novels often continued the same themes.

Between the late 1800s and the 1970s, the novel became an important literary element in southern African-American culture. In 1853, Williams Wells Brown, a southern-born slave, wrote Clotel or The President’s Daughter, a novel that reflected the problems of a mulatto family who happened to be presidential. This was the “birth of a literary tradition,” (Bing 1) but, when the novel was published in the north, Thomas Jefferson had been replaced by an anonymous senator (Harley 157.) Sutton Griggs published Imperium and Imperio, the first “black power” novel about an all black republic in Texas in 1899 (Harley 199.) W.E.B. Dubois commanded a national audience in 1903, when he wrote The Souls of Black Folks (Bing 4.) Such novels are the standard representations of African-American cultural consciousness (McHenry 7.) The challenge to make an artistic contribution and define an identity became important, and, although novels might reflect the times, many also reflected the ancestral reaction to slavery. Charles Waddell Chestnut was the first black author to consider the artistic requirements of the novel form (Bing 1.) Some southern novels, like The House Behind the Cedars (Chestnut 1900), Cane (Toomer 1923,) The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man (James W. Johnson, 1912) and even Invisible Man (Ralph Ellison 1952) concerned migration and the problems of the southern black migrant who came to the north, (Wilson and Ferris 3) but the sentiments of enslavement continued to be reflected, as well.

The South was a literary wasteland before World War I (“ Tell About the South,” 2/14/02.) Although southern novels reflected historical events, the themes related to slavery remained constant. Prior to the mid 1970s, many novels were concerned with African-American identity like the early novels up through the Harlem Renaissance, but the viewpoint of the southern African-American was part of the evolution of the novel form (Greene 3.) Although 300,000 blacks were commissioned and fought in World War I along with 1400 officers, none of them wrote about the experience (Harley 217.) As time went on, novels like Nella Larson’s Quicksand written in 1928 (Harley 235) followed Toomer’s Cane. Both southern authors reflected the past and the idea of slavery. George Schuyler wrote Black No

More and Arna Bontemps published God Sends Sunday, following Wallace Thurman's The Blacker the Berry(1929) and Jessie Fauset's There Is Confusion(1928) as the Great Depression began. The stock market crash in 1929 ended the patronage and the prosperity of the publishing industry, crucial to the support of African-American authors, but the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters became a union with a charter from the American Federation of Labor during the same year (Harley 234.) African-Americans did not stop writing novels, and "folk novels" like Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God and Ollie Miss by George Henderson reflected the economic times before World War II. Such novels were also the precursors of the socially aware novels of the 1940s (Greene 5.) The novels of the 1930s and the 1940s, like previous writings by black southerners, reflected the oral traditions of the storyteller and the autobiographical link to slavery and they were the basis for the social protest novels of the 1960s and the 1970s.

World War II changed the South forever. Blacks and whites have borrowed ideas from each other, consciously and subconsciously, for no southern author can ever escape the "other southerner," ("Tell About the South," 2/21/02) regardless of the author's viewpoint. World War II finally and officially ended the economic depression left over from the Civil War, and participation in the United States Army had encouraged both racial equality and "social justice authors" ("Tell About the South," 2/21/02.) For many novelists, and for ordinary people in society as well, change was not fundamental; many authors wrote about personal identity, cultural identity and African themes.

The literary reflections of the changes in society was contained in descriptive novels like those of Richard Wright (Native Son) and William Attaway (Blood on the Forge, 1941.) In fact, Native Son (1938) set the pattern for later self-definition novels in the 1970s which reflected the historical facts of the Civil Rights struggle. Although Richard Wright was probably the most well known author, the 1940s ended with a "flurry of Southern writers" ("Tell About the South," 2/21/02.)

As the country continued to recover from World War II, William Thomas wrote a fictional autobiography, The Seeking (Andrews, 4.) The increasing tendency towards autobiography and the inclusion of cultural values continued as African-American novelists evolved through the 1950s. Willard Motley wrote Knock on Any Door and Chester Hines wrote If He Hollers, Let Him Go; Anne Petry's The Street preceded Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man (1952.) Ellison found his inspiration in "jazz and blues as well as in folklore" (McHenry 10) and from his own inner voice ("Tell About the South," 2/21/02.) He brought cultural values into his portrait of African-Americans in the United States as his narrator migrates from the south to the north. In 1953, James Baldwin published Go Tell It On the Mountain (Bing 1.) Baldwin was interested in the paradox of African-Americans as part of life in the United States and the "failed promises of American democracy" (McHenry 10.) In 1959, Paule Marshall wrote Brown Girl, Brown Stones, continuing the trend of identity themes and echoing the autobiographical trend. The changing times altered the literature, but literature continued to reflect the pain of slavery as it had become part of our history. Authors continued to focus on realism as they portrayed the conditions of life in the United States.

In the 1960s, “Black is beautiful” was a common saying and LeRoi Jones became Amiri Basraka (Olorunto 6) after writing Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note (Bailey 3.) The Black Arts movement sought to communicate with the masses. Sonia Sanchez, who also retold some traditional tales, and Larry Neal welcomed a lack of mainstream acceptance, (McHenry 11,12) but The Autobiography of Malcolm X with Alex Haley was also popular (Andrews, 4.) Reflecting the times, The Angry Ones by John Williams was published. Other notable African-American authors were John O. Killen, Margaret Walker Alexander and Robert Dean Pharr. In 1962, James Meredith integrated Ole’ Miss and Ernest Gaines returned to Baton Rouge to write (“Tell About the South,” 2/28/02.) William M. Kelley published A Different Drummer (Harley 285,) a novel about leaving society, and Jubilee, by Margaret Walker, was published in 1966 (Harley 297.) In the same year, Ishmael Reed published Free Lance Pallbearers (Harley 301.) In 1968, Eldridge Cleaver published Soul on Ice (Bing 1.) The era of the 1960s is best typified by Julius Lester, who published two books in 1968: Look Out Whitey! Black Power’s Gon Get Your Mamma and To Be A Slave. The turbulent times relating to the ongoing struggle for Civil Rights represented a new future, and the south “looked more like the rest of the country” (“Tell About the South,” 2/21/02.) The historical climate was reflected in the literature, but authors continued to focus on the themes found in the older oral tradition.

The social unrest of the decade found its way into literature, but African-American novelists continued to turn back to the slavery issue. In the 1950s and the 1960s, Africa “represented what Greece and Rome represented to white Europeans and Americans; (Olorunto 6) it was the origin of culture and history. African-American authors continued in the autobiographical vein and distanced themselves from European influences. Both the descendents of slaves and the descendents of slave owners were writing in the South. As the sixties ended and the seventies began, the Viet Nam war had created hawks and doves among American novelists, but African-American novelists reflected a different perspective.

In the 1970s, a new generation of writers revealed different parts of the African-American experience (“Tell About the South,” 2/28/02.) In 1970, Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye (Harley 311) represented one kind of female experience with echoes back to slavery. Fictional autobiography was represented by H. Rap Brown’s Die, Nigger, Die and The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman (1971) by Ernest Gaines; although these novels represented different looks at the African experience, both were influenced by slave narratives (Andrews 4.) In 1976, Alex Haley wrote Roots (Bing 2 and Harley 329.) This work took the autobiographical trend even further and brought national attention to the issue of slavery for African-Americans. In 1976, the presidency of a southerner, Jimmy Carter, marked a trend towards a national homogeneity (“Tell About the South,” 2/28/02,) but southern African-American novelists continued to write tales based in the past like Oxherding Tale by Charles Johnson and Song of Solomon by Toni Morrison (1977)(McHenry 12.) In 1977, Eldridge Cleaver published Soul on Fire, and, the following year Ishmael Reed published Mumbo Jumbo (McHenry 15.) By 1979, the history, in the form of slavery, was still present. Barbara C. Ribaud wrote Sally Hemmings, (Harley 333) another version of “the president’s daughter.”

The focus on slavery and the return to old stories continued through the decade of the eighties. Sherley A. Williams wrote Dessa Rose, (Andrews 4) and Rita Dove published The Yellow House on the Corner. Female African-American novelists revealed their concepts concerning the African-American experience. The Women of Brewster Place by Gloria Naylor (1980) and The Salt Eaters by Toni Cade Bambara represent a search for moral wisdom with African roots, (Olorunto 6) and Tar Baby written in 1981 by Toni Morrison, carried the slave narrative influence (Andrews 5.) The autobiographical theme continued as well, in novels like Marked By Fire by Joyce Thomas and Ntozake Shange's Sassafras, Cypress and Indigo (McHenry 14,) and John Williams wrote The Man Who Cried I Am. In 1984, Linda Brown wrote Rainbow Round My Shoulder (Harley 343.) By 1987, Toni Morrison continued the return to African ideas with Beloved and Mamma Day written by Gloria Naylor in 1988 traveled into the past to forge some African connections (McHenry 13.) In the 1970s and the 1980s, the literary trend was to return to African ideas to find answers (Olorunto 6.) Since many authors also traveled to Africa, the autobiographical aspect of their writing was strong, as was the idea of a cultural reunion with things African.

In the nineties and up to the present, authors have continued to return to the idea of slavery, as represented by neo-slave narratives like Charles Johnson's Middle Passage (Andrews 6.) Waiting to Exhale by Terry McMillan, written in 1992, (Harley 361) is representative of the autobiographical trend. Toni Morrison and others continued to write in ways that reflected the oral tradition and the historical fact of slavery, as well. Today, the African-American writer is part of a "literary aviary where artists may be in the same place, but they are singing a slightly different song" ("Tell About the South," 2/28/02.) This is seen in Eddy L. Harris work, The South of Haunted Dreams and in Ralph Ellison's posthumous publication (1999), Juneteenth (Harley 362.) The southern viewpoint is found in the African-American novel (Greene 4) but it is an African-American viewpoint; it is autobiographical, with historical references from slave narratives through realistic fiction to true autobiographies. The stories embedded in the oral tradition were part of the culture of early African-American people and they were to be found as a historical backdrop for written literature as well. The new southern writers are the heirs of the great writers of the past ("Tell About the South," 2/28/02.)

If only the written word is considered as literature, it would seem that southern African-American literature has evolved from a sparse body of writings focused on black life in the south and on historical events to a more distinct and sophisticated literature (Greene 1.) Southern writers are "exiles but embedded in their community" (Reed and Reed 6.) Of course, the written literature is, for the most part, the product of the older spoken word. Other influences such as religious orientation, music, common aphorisms and folktales had a major effect on writing (Greene 4.) Plot structure, language, imagery and symbolism, and characterization which appeared in novels and other works were all affected by the "other literature," the stories found in the oral tradition and the folklore which traveled from Africa and which arrived under conditions of slavery.

Folklore came to the United States as part of the cultural connections of various and varied settlers. In the south, folklore came from geography and history, (Cohen 1) as well as from tall tales of hunters and riverboat men, brags, songs and sayings, and the stories of slaves. In the south, “the living word and the performance, the marrow of folklore, were likewise the marrow of southern culture” (Wilson and Ferris 1.) Folk studies, like Zora Neal Hurston’s Mules and Men, show that collections of stories from the black south, along with the true stories of the slave narratives are the underpinnings of southern African-American Literature, for “art transforms folklore” (“Tell About the South,” 2/28/02.)

The combination of racial composition, the sectional difference of geography and “historical developments” (Cohen 1) distinguishes the South from the rest of the United States. Africans brought their culture and their history, and the elements of folklore continued in the oral traditions of slaves. Although slave owners tried to annihilate African traditions, “the arch-survivor, Brer Rabbit,” was born in Africa (Cohen 1.) Folklore appeared in the written word, where it was often used by white authors like John Lawson, Edgar Allen Poe, William Gilmore Simms, Mark Twain and William Faulkner as a literary focus or technique, (Cohen 3) and it was the substance of the Southern oral tradition in the stories which were told, not written. The notion that “folk roots are sub-literary or wanting in aesthetic integrity is absurd” (Killens and Ward 7.) Folklore found a way into the true stories of the slaves as well, since it was a part of African experience.

Slave Narratives

“...if you don’t remember where you came from, or how you got from there to here, you have a very hard time moving on (Simon, 163.)” African traditions appear in the segment of literature called slave narratives. The slave narratives proved that black people could command language and effectively express themselves (McHenry, 5.) Along with Frederick Douglass’ narrative, known for its association of literacy to freedom (McHenry, 5,) Moses Roper’s A Narrative of the Adventures and Escape of Moses Roper from American Slavery in 1837 and Olaudah Equiano’s The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustave Vassa (1789) are typical of the genre (Olouronto 3) and these works indicate a longing for the African homeland.

Slave narratives were written and published as history continued to move on. In 1770, A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albet Gronniosaw, An African Prince as Related by Himself was published; in the same year, Crispus Attucks was the first African-American to die in the Boston Massacre. By 1798, when A Narrative of Venture, A Native of Africa but Resident Above Sixty Years in the United States was published, anti-slavery orations were common, Kentucky had entered the union as a slave state (1792) and the first minstrels had appeared in New Orleans (Harley 61-65.) In 1810, when The Blind American Slave or Memoirs of Boguereau Brindio was published, about 19% of the U. S. population was African-American. By the time Willow published his narrative in 1815, the Underground Railroad had been established by Quaker Levi Coffin (Harley 79.) In 1824, William Grimes published The Life of William Grimes, Liberia had been established as a black colony, and Dartmouth

College opened admissions to African-Americans; in 1825, A Narrative of Some Remarkable Incidents in the Life of Solomon Bailey was published and The History of Mary Prince was the first narrative by a black woman. The harsh aspects of slavery and rebellion continued to be revealed in The Confessions of Nat Turner in 1831 (Andrews 4 and Harley 95.) Through the 1830s, slave narratives continued to support the abolitionist cause. By the 1840s and the 1850s, slave narratives began to reveal the struggles of African-Americans who had migrated to the north as “fugitives from the south (Andrews 1.)” Sojourner Truth (Isabella Hurley) published her narrative in 1850, (Harley 125) and slave narratives continued to reveal one of the causes of the coming Civil War.

Although more than one hundred narratives exist, including some written in Arabic, some historians doubted their authenticity, (Reed and Reed 2) but narratives like Harriet Jacobs’ Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861) revealed the pain of slavery (McHenry 5.) Slave narratives continued to be written as the Civil War changed the economy of the South.

“As historical documents, slave narratives chronicle the evolution of white supremacy in the south” and give voice to first generation African-Americans (Andrews 2.) The narratives are a major part of the literary legacy. The pattern of the narrative: the narrator portrays slavery in all of its extremes of physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual deprivation. A personal crisis precipitates escape. The narrator often stresses faith and a commitment to liberty and human dignity. Finally, after an arduous quest, the slave attains the free states or “north” and may rename himself or herself (Andrews 2-3.) During antebellum times, writers like William Wells Brown stressed African-American survival; authors often wrote with a “keen sense of regional identity” (Andrews 4.) The influences of the slave narratives were found in works by white authors of the times and included Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852) and Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (1884.) More modern novels, like William Styron’s Confessions of Nat Turner in 1967 and Toni Morrison’s Beloved in 1987 also show the influences of the slave narratives. A later book, included as a narrative, Up from Slavery by Booker T. Washington (1903), emphasized interracial cooperation and black progress, and was taken more seriously as an “American success story,” (Andrews 4) but African-American authors began to strive to revise the stereotypes of plantation fiction, minstrel shows and vaudeville acts (McHenry 6) as they turned to the slave narratives for inspiration.

The slave narrative was a product of an author who was both southern and black (Greene 4.) Although some narratives were the result of collaboration with a white abolitionist, (McHenry 4) slave narratives had an influence, along with the stories from the oral tradition, on every aspect of written literature. Slave narratives, themselves, “embody a considerable amount of folklore” (Killens and Ward 7.) The autobiographical narrative, which outnumbered novels written by African-Americans until the Depression Era, is the most extensive and influential tradition in African-American literature (Andrews 9.) The popularity of the genre wasn’t limited to the United States, (McHenry 4) and other countries read slave narratives to learn about conditions of slavery. The slave narrative, and the remnants of the narratives found in published literature, is a vital literary legacy, since such works tell

the brutal tale of slavery. Narratives, along with the stories from the oral tradition, reflect the history of the times as slaves struggled to recall and to relate to a lost homeland as they survived in a new country. Narratives were, however, only one kind of southern African-American story; southern literature began as the well-told tale.

Selected Stories from the Oral Tradition

“Literature began with the oral tradition, evolved from the blending of oral and written traditions and continues to grow as self-conscious artists adopt or modify their literary heritage to serve contemporary needs” (Killens and Ward 7.) African-American stories in the “vernacular tradition” are traceable to Esu, an African god, who was a messenger of the Supreme Being, a trickster, and an intermediary between humanity and destiny (Herskovits 253.) In addition, African-American people carried with them, along with music and all other aspects of culture, “their myths and their forms of performance,” (Olorunto 2) along with the well-told tale. The key operatives in southern African-American storytelling are cooperation and response; stories taught people how to respond to the environment with its physical, intellectual and spiritual challenges and to use the “gift of memory” to achieve community (Robinson 215.) In the United States, repetition changed the African stories, and created adaptations, but repetition was also “signifying a black difference,” (Gates 3) which had arrived along with the slaves. For hundreds of years, professional storytellers had performed in Western African countries. Because such cultures did not often have written history, *griots* had to remember and retell “up to seven generations worth of oral history.” They also acted as a spokesperson and editorialized on current events. Their audiences were expected to participate (“call and response”) (Ridge 13.) The *griot* informed people of their roles in society and was well respected; this role continues today so that those of African descent can understand a lost African past (Kouyate 180 and Asante 492.) In the United States, in the South, an older person within the family or the group, took on the role of the *griot* to tell the tales to the young.

Authors who wrote and published stories were indebted to the oral stories for “structure, theme and vision” (Olorunto 2.) For example, the small animals of Africa’s trickster stories, like spider, tortoise and hare, were replaced by others, notably Brer Rabbit, and larger predators like lions and elephants became bears, mountain lions and foxes. Rhythmic patterns from the African oral tradition appeared in retold tales and in writing: who said what, when they said it, how they said it, to whom it was said and the response (Robinson 213.) This pattern is carried into modern stories, as well, and many authors continue to go back to Africa, metaphorically and physically, for inspiration. It is in the tradition of vernacular stories that much of African-American literature is found. Africa was near, in the minds of many slaves. Slaves related their own experience, but folk life gave birth to stories that contained African motifs: legends, myths, praise songs and proverbs. The motifs include “motion imagery, the home of the spirit, the trickster, the sacredness of motherhood (and family), game playing and verbal competition, and supernatural beings” (Olorunto 6.) Although stories may contain more than one

motif, these southern stories can be, and have been, categorized by those who have retold them or collected them; southern African-American stories reflect the historical fact of slavery and the memories of a lost homeland.

Stories in the oral tradition can be divided into some basic categories. One group is folktales, which tend to answer questions, and moral tales, which provide instruction. Folktales often include stories in which animals talk and have other very human characteristics and moral tales occasionally masquerade as fairy tales. Included in this group are retold myths and other stories with direct connections to the African homeland. This kind of story was popularized by Joel Chandler Harris in 1881 (Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings), but these stories were told long before they were written. These tales reflect a human interest in animals and why they act as they do, as do folktales from other cultures. As time passed, stories took on new meanings, became important as a means of imparting wisdom, and revealed the possibility that the trickster rabbit, representing the slave, could triumph. The stories also came to include the use of disguises by the trickster, and, in some tales the trickster is tricked (Houston 99 and Kouyte 180.) Slaves told and retold these stories as a means of connecting with a lost homeland and relating to current conditions; the stories reflect history and the world-view of the storyteller.

Another category of story seems to be more directly related to slavery. These stories emphasize “survival among an enslaved people and foster a sense of pride and undoubted heroism” (Robinson 212.) These stories are in the tradition of the slave narrative and reflect one person’s life experiences, or they may take the form of a historical narrative. At times, stories tied to the experience of slavery are closely connected to folktales, fables and myths, and they have been retold and collected in the same way.

Similarly, stories concerning the family or “family and friends” may overlap into other categories. In these stories, “implied wisdom is learned and transmitted by the enslaved to their descendants” (Goss and Barnes 2.) Family lore may be impersonal, in that it could have happened to other families and it reflects a wider, older, emotional experience rather than the “emotion and wisdom on one individual” (Morgan 298.) Stories of family life are also often stories of slavery or of the lost homeland.

Even stories that might fall into the category of humor, tall tale or anecdote reflect the history of Africa and of slavery. Humorous folktales were shared among black captives from the beginning (Coleman 431.) Such stories, while carrying information about history, also provided a means of coping with frustrations and the terrible effects of various slavery induced situations. Some humorous tales are

modifications of the animal tales with Brer Rabbit-like main character, often a slave or share cropper named John. These stories feature the same caricature and exaggeration found in modern comedy routines, but they served the purpose of providing another way to react to the conditions in which African-Americans found themselves.

The performance element is seen in another form of the oral story, for stories are frequently told as rhymes, rhythm tales or ballads, the antecedents of today's rap music. Black captives were frequently forbidden to use the instruments and music of their homeland, and songs, games and dances evolved from the ordinary, everyday life of their times (Goss and Barnes 487.) Information was often an integral part of the message when slaves sang to warn other slaves about the plantation patrol rider or about traveling by the Underground Railroad. Sometimes the message was of thanks or love, and sometimes the rhyme told a story that reflected the condition of slavery. For example, "Hambone" speaks of a time when the best parts of the slaughtered hogs were reserved for whites and the discarded ham bone was circulated to season the cooking of one family after another (Asante 490.) Folk poetry was the earliest poetry heard in homes and churches detailing "culture, arts, crafts, secrets, ceremonies, and rites of passage," (Asante 491) and poetry was recited and rhymes and songs were sung long before they were written down. The poetic tradition, constant for more than three hundred years in the South, consists of rhyming, moralizing and telling a story, (Asante 492) or imparting information. The rhymes of black captives provided information or told the story of captivity, often disguised as a straightforward poem or game.

Finally, stories in the oral tradition may be categorized as supernatural tales. The "creature remembered from the homeland" came ashore with the African slaves (Garcia-Barrio 357.) In African-American tales, the Hairy Man of Georgia, the guije from the Caribbean and the Tunda all have the tendency to carry off children, and many slaves in the United States lost children just as suddenly. Other tales feature creatures which affect adults, but many supernatural tales arose from historic events in which African-Americans took part. Stories of avenging ghosts or returning spirits were often told as closure for an actual event (Garcia-Barrio 358.) Ghosts, haunted places and people, and witches are found in the most interesting of southern stories, and, like other African-American tales, they reflect the condition of slavery, the history of the time or the idea of the remembered African homeland.

Texts and the Textbook

Several texts and stories have been selected for use with this curriculum unit. Other stories from these or other texts could be substituted to adapt the curriculum unit for other grade levels or another area of emphasis.

From Amy Cohen's Sea to Shining Sea, the following stories were selected to represent folktales, moral tales and myths: "Brer Possum's Dilemma" retold by Jackie Torrance (pp. 249-251), "The Cat's Purr," retold by Ashley Bryce (pp. 260-261,) and "The Split Dog," retold by Richard Chase (pp. 230-231.) Slavery tales are "The People Could Fly" by Virginia Hamilton (pp. 144-146) and "How the Slaves Helped Each Other" retold by William Faulkner (pp. 130-131.) Stories of Family and Friends are "The Talking Mule" by Z. N. Hurston (pp. 224-225), and three traditional tales: "Hush Little Baby (pp. 98-99)," "Long John (pp. 136-137,)" and "Follow the Drinking Gourd (p. 140.)" Humorous stories include Steve Sanfield's retelling of "High John, the Carpenter," (pp. 134-135,) "Brer Rabbit in Mr. Man's Garden," retold by Julius Lester (pp. 212-219,) and Harold Courlander's retelling of "Sharing the Crops (pp. 219-221.) Rhymes and rhythms are represented in two traditional works: "Juba This and Juba That" and "Hambone (pp. 42-43.)" The supernatural story is "The Peculiar Such Thing" retold by Virginia Hamilton (pp. 338-339.)

Great American Folklore, edited by Kemp Battle, is where the following selections were found. In the folklore, fable and myth category, "The Tale of the Dog with Upside Down Legs," retold by M. A. Jagendorgf (p. 160 f.), "The Tar Baby," retold by J. Harris (p. 346 f.) and "Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Fox," retold by J. Harris (p. 348 f.) are representative. Slavery/history stories include "The Fight (p. 110 f.)," "The Hatfield McCoy Feud: How It Started (p. 141)," and "When We Isn't We (p. 182.)" "Family" stories are "Nail Soup," retold by Leonard Roberts (p. 14 f.), and "Bundle of Troubles," retold by Frank Dobie (p. 286 f.) Two traditional tales reflect the humorous category: "The Travelers Homecoming (p. 42 f.)" and "Sheer Crops (p. 352 f.)" Rhyming stories are "The Rebel," a traditional song (p. 126,) and "John Henry," retold by Frank Shay. Supernatural stories include "Old Ferro," retold by Frank Burnes (p. 304 f.) and "The Seven Year Light on Bone Hill," a traditional story (p. 325 f.)

One Hundred and One African-American Read-Aloud Stories, edited by Susan Kantor, is the source for the following stories. Myths, fables and folklore, in this book, include rabbit stories and Brer Rabbit stories. Traditional tales in this category are: "Why the Rabbit Has a Short Tail and Long Ears (p. 200 f.)," "Who Ate the Butter? (p. 196 f.)," "Anancy Gets What He Deserves (p. 20 f.)," and "Nine Wild Dogs and One Lion (p. 27 f.)" Excerpts from stories about slavery and history are: Booker T. Washington's "Up From Slavery (pp. 334 f.)," "The Slave Dancer," by Paula Fox (p. 359 f.) and "My Name is Not Angelica," by Scott O'Dell (p. 344.) The Family and Friends category includes several traditional stories: "Who Shall Marry the Chief's Daughter? (p. 136,)" "Three Sons of a Chief (p. 136,)" "Baboon Skins (pp. 60-67,)" and "Two Ways to Count to Ten (pp. 78-84.)" Several stories represent the humorous category: "The Champion Liar (p. 243 f.)," "Pumpkins, Potatoes and Corn (p. 247 f.)," "Salt the Pudding (p. 248,)" and "Lucky Shot (p. 253 f.)" Rhyming stories and rhythm selections include the traditional: "Hambone," "Kum Ba Ya," "Take This Hammer," and "Over My Head (pp. 409-414.)" Supernatural stories include "The Magic Bones (p. 104)" and "The Three Little Eggs," retold by Terry Berger (p. 96.)

Virginia Hamilton's The People Could Fly contains numerous stories in each category. These have been selected to represent fables, folktales and myths: "Tappin, the Land Turtle (p. 20 f.,)" "Bruh Alligator and Bruh Deer (p. 26 f.,)" "Bruh Lizard and Bruh Rabbit (p. 31 f.,)" and "Bruh Alligator Meets Trouble (p.

35 f.)” History and slavery are found in “Carrying the Running Aways (p. 141 f.),” “How Nehemiah Got Free (p. 147 f.),” “The Riddle Tale of Freedom (p. 156 f.),” “The Most Useful Slave (p. 160,)” and, of course, the title story (p. 166.) Two selections represent the Family and Friends category: “A Wolf and Little Daughter (p. 60 f.)” and “Manuel Had a Riddle (pp. 60-75.)” Humorous stories include: “Papa John’s Tall Tale (p. 76 f.),” “The Beautiful Girl of the Moon Tower (p. 53 f.),” “The Two Johns (p. 89 f.),” and “Wiley, His Mamma and the Hairy Man (p. 90.)” That last story could also be included, with the following tales, in the supernatural category: “John and the Devil’s Daughter (p. 107 f.),” “Little Eight John (p. 121 f.),” “Jack and the Devil (p. 126 f.),” and “Better Wait Til Martin Comes (p. 133 f.)”

Some stories have been selected from Zora Neale Hurston’s Mules and Men. The following tales represent myths, folktales and moral tales: “How the Possum Lost the Hair Off His Tale (p. 103,)” “How the Gator Got His Mouth (p. 104,)” “The Goat That Flagged a Train (p. 112,)” and “How the Cat Got Nine Lives (p. 121.)” Slavery and history are the category for the following stories: “How the Negroes Got Their Freedom (p. 82,)” “Massa and the Bear (p. 72,)” and “John, the First Colored Man in Massa’s House (p. 79 f.)” Family stories include: “The Son Who Went to College (p. 125,)” “All These Are Mine (p. 169,)” “Man and the Catfish (p. 95,)” and “How to Write a Letter (p. 40.)” Humorous tales and anecdotes are represented by these stories: “The Quickest Trick (p. 39,)” “How the Brother Was Called to Preach (p. 21,)” and “The Workingest Pill You Ever Seen (p. 46.)” Songs and rhythm tales are found in the following: “Sal, Sal (p. 35,)” “Ah’m Gointa Loose Dis Right Hand Shackle from ‘Round My Leg (p. 154,)” “John Henry (p. 56 f.),” and “Mule on De Mount (p. 269.)” In the supernatural category, the following stories have been selected: “High Walker and Bloody Bones (p. 173,)” “How the Devil Coined a Word (p. 160,)” “How Jack-O-Lanterns Came to Be (p. 163,)” and “God and the Devil in the Cemetery (p. 87.)”

Additional stories were selected from Talk That Talk, edited by Linda Goss and Marian Barnes: this text also contains modern stories in the oral tradition. Folklore, myths and fables are represented by the following stories: “Brer Rabbit and the Briar Patch,” retold by Annie Reed (p. 30 f.) “Why Anansi Hides in Corners,” told by Jeremiah Nabawi (p. 35 f.) “The Ant Story,” by Constance Garcia-Barrio (p. 47 f.) “Don’t Play With Your Supper,” by Kwasi Asare (p. 46 f.) and “A Bush Got Ears,” by Naomi Clarke. Stories which reflect slavery and history are: “The Ibo Landing Story,” by Frankie and Doug Quimby (p. 139 f.) “Looking Back On My Texas Heritage,” by Adele L. Simmons (p. 161 f.) “How We Got Over,” by Jackie and Rosa Maddox (p. 117 f.) “A Pioneer’s Story of Long Creek,” by Naomi Clarke (p. 141 f.) and “The Violence of Desperate Men” by Martin L. King (p. 145 f.) In the Family and Friends category, the following tales have been selected: “Annie, the Bully,” by L. Randall (p. 225 f.) “Death of a Boy,” by C. Ochebe (p. 230 f.) “Sikhambe-Nge-Nyonga,” by A. C. Jordan (p. 236 f.) “River and the Foolish One,” by Kwasi Asare (p. 246 f.) and “Aunt Zerletha,” by Ruby Dee (p. 278 f.) Humorous selections are: “Jack and De Devil,” by W. Horton (p. 365 f.) “A Laugh That Mean Freedom,” by M. Brown (p. 367 f.) “Si Mary Bigfoot,” by E. W. Jacobs (p. 403 f.) “Umu Madu in the Good Old Days,” by T. Obinkaram Echewa (p. 405 f.) and “February,” by Dick Gregory (p. 224 f.) The following items were selected to represent the rhyme and rhythm category: “John Henry,” by Huddie Ledbetter (p. 447 f.) “The Legend of Dolemite,” retold by N. Nduma (p. 451 f.) “African-American History Rap,” by S. J. Holley (p. 473 f.) “Signifyin’ Monkey” by Oscar Brown, Jr. (p. 456 f.) and “The Ballad of Joe Meek,” by Sterling

Brown (p. 467 f.) Supernatural tales are: "The Two Sons," by A. McGill (p. 311 f.), "The White Dog," by W. Gigettes (p. 320 f.), "Barney McKay," by Jackie Hunter as told to Marian Barnes (p. 325 f.), "The Devil's Dulcimer," by J. Harrington (p. 348 f.), and "Daddy and the Plat-Eye Ghost," by Eleanora Tate (p. 326 f.)

Jump Up and Say, edited by Linda and Clay Goss is an anthology that gets its name from the proper response after the preacher has asked, "Can I get a witness?" This text also contains some modern stories that follow the older traditions. Folktales, myths and moral tales are represented by the following selections: "The Young Lion," by Tejumola F. Ologboni (pp. 28-32,) "How the Leopard Got His Claws," by Chinua Achebe and John Iroaganachi (pp. 36-42,) "Nzambi and the Earth Connection," by David Anderson (Sankofa) (pp. 50-52,) "Brer Rabbit and the Peanut Shells," by Maxine LeGale (p. 173 f.,) and "Brer Rabbit Builds a Home," by Jackie Torrance. History and the slavery theme are found in the following tales: "Feet in the Water, Song in the Heart," by David Anderson (Sankofa) (p. 82 f.,) "Sojourner Truth Speaks," by Alice McGill (p. 89 f.,) "Get On Board and Tell Your Story," by Gloria Davin Goode (p. 87 f.,) and "The Ballad of the Underground Railroad," by Charles L. Blockson. Family and Friends tales are as follows: "The Tree of Love," by Linda Goss (p. 97 f.,) "Grandma," by Charlotte B. Alston (p. 110 f.,) "The Crumb Catchers," by J. Bishop (p. 118 f.,) and "Bubba," by Sonia Sanchez (p. 123 f.) Humorous tales are: "Why Women Always Take Advantage of Men," by Zora N. Hurston (p. 177,) "Funeral," by Mary Carter Smith (p. 180 f.,) "Uglyrella," by J. Pena (p. 183 f.,) and "Riley's Riddle," by Mary T. Burroughs (p. 171 f.) Rhymes which tell tales are represented by: "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks (p. 137,) "My Friend Bennie," by Rex Ellis (p. 141 f.,) "Frog Went A Cruizin'," by Morton Brooks (p. 157 f.,) and "Strawberry, Strawberry," by H. B. Insignares (p. 159 f.) Supernatural stories are: "The Talking Skull," a traditional tale, (p. 232,) "Ol' Ben," by Rex Ellis (p. 231,) "Ligahoo," by Lyn Joseph (pp. 238-241,) and "Removing the Veil," by Caroline I. Frink Reed (pp. 242-243.)

Finally, stories were selected from African Folktales by Roger D. Abrahams. Although these are not stories from African-American literature, they provide a look at the origins of some of the other stories. Selections which are in the folklore, myth and moral tale category are: "Why Monkeys Live in Trees (p. 158 f.,)" "Saving the Rain (p. 180 f.,)" "The Trickster's Encounter (p. 185 f.,)" and "Is It Right That He Bite Me?(p. 140 f.)" Family and Friends tales include: "He Starved His Own (p. 134 f.,)" "The Cloth of Pembe Mirui (p. 364 f.,)" "The Smart Man and the Fool (p. 136 f.,)" and "An Eye for an Eye(p. 113.)" Humorous stories are represented in the following tales: "One Trick Deserves Another (p. 193 f.,)" "The Trapper Trapped (p. 203 f.,)" "The Clever Wakasanke (p. 183 f.,) and "Two Friends From Their Childhood (p. 227 f.) Rhymes and rhythms appear in these stories: "The Tiger Slights the Tortoise (p. 142 f.)" "The Disobedient Sisters (p. 145 f.,)" "All the Little Animals (p. 165 f.,)" and "Treachery Repaid (p. 119.) Tales of the supernatural include the following tales: "Never Ask Me About My Family (p. 336 f.,)" "Their Eyes Came Out (p. 133 f.,)" "The Leopard Woman (p. 150 f.,)" and "The Orphan with the Cloak of Skins (p. 309 f.)"

The stories of the south, in the African-American oral tradition, are interesting, and many categories tend to overlap. For the curriculum unit, a specific text will be used to interest seventh grade students in the ways literature can connect to history and to life. Writers construct history, and African-American

authors reflect the oral tradition; these ideas are also related to the theme of southern identity. Identity often appears as a literary theme, is of cultural importance and is often of special importance to middle school children. A thematic focus and some literary exploration can only help students make meaningful connections in exploring literature and history.

The text used for literary exploration is The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural by Patricia McKissack. The title refers to the half hour between daylight and dark when scary stories have the most power. As in most areas of literature, the stories also reflect other concepts. In this case, although the stories might all have “fear” as a connective, other elements of the southern experience are present. For example, some stories deal with slavery, and one story is about the Ku Klux Klan. One of the stories relates to the unionization of African-American porters (1927-1939) because it is the kind of “train” story these men told to each other. One story reflects the place of the southern midwife as a wise woman and another story relates directly to the history of Civil Rights. Healers, or “root doctors” have a place in one story in the collection. One tale relates to the real human reaction of wanting to disappear or “fly away,” in keeping with many similar stories in the oral tradition. Finally, there are two stories that relate to the folktale motif of charms and a “monster.” This text, with multiple connections to history and to the idea of the Southern story, is suitable for middle school students. For older students, Raw Head, Bloody Bones: African-American Tales of the Supernatural, selected by Mary E. Lyons, could be used.

Lesson Plans, Objectives, Strategies and Classroom Activities

The curriculum unit is organized in the following way: two ninety-minute classes will be spent in the computer lab and the library. The computer lab contains twenty-eight computers and the library has eight computers; technical assistance is available from the technology teacher in the lab and the librarian in the library. One or both rooms may be used, depending on availability. The remaining eight to ten days are spent in the regular classroom, with students grouped at eight tables; each group consists of three or four students. The following materials, aside from the selected texts, are used in the computer lab, the library and the classroom: pencils, pens and paper, markers, chart paper, the selected texts and the textbook, maps of the United States and of the South. The Inquiring School Model (Calfee) and the Directed Reading Model (Hamilton and Sauer) are used for all lessons. (*Please see the Appendix for detailed lesson plans.*)

Lesson Plan, Days One and Two

Content Standards: Communications 2 and 4, Technology 9, Citizenship 7 and 8, and Arts and Humanities 2 and 3.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program focus (areas of interaction): approaches to learning and *homo faber* (man, the maker).

Objective: The student will examine and discuss the idea of Southern identity and will be able to categorize selected stories from the African-American oral tradition as belonging to specific categories; students will be able to explain and define the attributes of the stories as presented by the instructor and as measured by an oral presentation by the group.

Strategies and activities:

The introduction contains an explanation of connections found in literature and culture.

1. The South: General information concerning the south is presented. Such information includes geographical location and some historical highlights. Prior knowledge is accessed using a word map or matrix. During a cooperative learning activity, students come to consensus concerning the idea of a southern identity and southern literature. Students will engage in accountable talk about what they know from family history or from previous instruction in Social Studies or Language Arts classes. The K-W-L process may be used to stimulate discussion (What do you know? What do you want to know? What have you learned?)
2. The Oral Tradition: Students will cooperatively examine samples of various types of Southern stories. Students will consider these questions: From where have these stories come? Why are they “southern stories?” What are the characteristics of these tales? How do these stories relate to African-American history? How are these stories similar? Different? What are these storytellers saying to us in modern times? Other questions may arise as the discussion progresses through the use of the Inquiring School and Directed Reading Model.

Lesson Plans, Day Three through Twelve

Content Standards: Communications 2 and 4, Citizenship 7 and 8 and Arts and Humanities 2 and 3.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program focus (areas of interaction): approaches to learning and *homo faber* (man, the maker).

Objective: The student will examine supernatural stories and relate the story to an event in African-American history as measured by class discussion and the successful completion of a student-selected activity.

Strategies and activities:

Each story in the text The Dark-Thirty, by Patricia McKissack is read, examined and discussed, using inquiry strategies. As a further focus for the literature, a time line will be devised which places each story among historical events. Students will relate each story to the southern elements of the oral tradition and to African-American history or to a specific event. Because the curriculum unit, focused on responding to literature, has an enrichment focus, suggested activities rather than traditional homework

are provided. For example, activities include topics for further research. Writing assignments relating to the theme of southern identity and what makes a southern story, and to the specific stories are suggested. Discussions also include the generation of graphic organizers. Students will extend the study of supernatural stories to include others from their own experience. Informal assessment occurs through an examination of the activities selected by individual students, and work products are displayed.

Connections are important to teachers and to students; we are members of a community of learners. The use of the anthology for the curriculum unit facilitates an examination of one type of African-American tale from the south, and it allows for connections to other stories and to African-American history. Average middle school students are able to understand the stories and to relate to the idea of a Southern identity. Communications Standards are implicit in the process of reading and responding and academic rigor and accountable talk are furthered by the discussions and cooperative learning activities associated with understanding the stories. Exploring cultural connections between history and literature can only lead to increased understanding.

Greater understanding provides for more rigorous examination of themes and concepts for students. Finally, an enlarged view of literature and historical connections can only lead to a greater truth: we are all connected.

Works Cited

Andrews, William L. "An Introduction to the Slave Narratives" in Documenting the American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu> February 15, 2002.

Asante, Molefi Koto, "Folk Poetry in the Storytelling Tradition" in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 491- 493.

Bailey, Roger B. "A Brief Chronology of African-American Literature" in SAC Litweb, 2000. Available <http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/laframlit.htm>, February 20, 2002.

Baker, Houston A. "Animal Tales and Lore" in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 99-102.

Battle, Kemp. Great American Folklore: Legends, Tales Ballads and Superstitions from All Across America. New York: Doubleday and Co., 1986.

Bing, Carter. "Literature" in *The Drum Links*, 2002. Available <http://drum.ncat.edu>

Cohen, Amy. *From Sea to Shining Sea: A Treasury of American Folklore and Folk Songs*. New York: Scholastic, 1993.

Cohen, Hennig. "Folklore" in *Documenting the American South*, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002.

"From Africa to America" in *The American Journey*, 2002. Available <http://www2worldbook.com> February 17, 2002.

Garcia-Barrio, Constance. "Creatures That Haunt America," in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) *Talk That Talk*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 357- 359.

Gates, Henry L. (ed.) *Black Literature and Literacy Theory*. New York: Methuen, Inc. 1984.

Goss, Linda and Marian Barnes (eds.) *Talk That Talk*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989.

Goss, Linda and Clay Goss (eds.) *Jump Up and Say: A Collection of Black Storytelling*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

Greene, J. Lee. "Black Literature" in *Documenting the American South*, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002.

Hamilton, Rebecca and S. Sauer. "The Directed Reading Model," workshop sponsored by Pittsburgh Public Schools Teaching, Learning and Assessment Division, February 2, 2002 at South Hills Middle School.

Hamilton, Virginia. *The People Could Fly*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993.

Harley, Sharon. *The Timetables of African-American History*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

Herskovits, Melville J. *The Myth of the Negro Past*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1958.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Mules and Men*. New York: Harper Collins Perennial Classics, 1990.

Kantor, Susan. *One Hundred and One African-American Read-Aloud Stories*. New York: Black Dog and Leventhal Publishers, 1998.

Killens, John O. and Jerry M. Ward. *Black Southern Voices*. New York: Meridian Group/Penguin Books, 1992.

Kouyate, D'Jimo. "The Role of the Griot" in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989,179-181.

McHenry, Elizabeth. "African American Literature" in Literature, 1998. Available <http://www.africana.com>, February 20, 2002.

McKissack, Patricia. The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural. New York: Scholastic, 1993.

Morgan, Kathryn L. "Caddy Buffers: Legends of a Middle Class Black Family in Philadelphia" in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 295-298.

Olorounto, Samuel B. "Studying African-American Literature in Its Global Context," 1992, VCCAJournal. Available <http://www.br.cc.va.us>, February 12,2002.

Reed, John and Dale Reed. "Grit Lit: Writers and Literature" in Anything Southern, 2001. Available <http://anythingsouthern.com>, February 17, 2002.

Ridge, Kari K. "Hip Hop History" in Read Magazine, 51, 13, 2/22/02, pp. 13-15.

Robinson, Beverly. "Historical Arenas of the African-American Storytelling," in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 211-216.

Simon, Ada DeBlanc. "Looking Back on My Texas Heritage" in Linda Goss and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 161-163.

"Tell About the South: Voices in Black and White," Public Broadcasting System WQED, Pittsburgh, February 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2002, A James Agee Film Project, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1999.

Wilson, Charles and William Ferris. "Literature in the American South" in Documenting the American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002.

Annotated Bibliography for Students and Teachers

Publications for students

Armstrong, William H. Sounder. New York: Scholastic, 1969,117 pages. The nineteenth century South is the historical setting for this novel about the faith of a sharecropper's son as he makes a hard journey to manhood. The boy (and the dog named Sounder) wait for the return of a father.

Blair, Walter. Tall-Tale America. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1944, 262 pages. Familiar stories, like "John Henry and the Machine in West Virginia, pp. 203 f., appear in this volume along with historical references and songs.

Bridges, Ruby and Margo Lundell (ed.) Through My Eyes. New York: Scholastic, 1999, 64 pages. The selection is an easy to read history of the life and times of Ruby Bridges, who became the first black child in an all-white school in September of 1960. It includes photographs, interviews and expository text.

Collier, James Lincoln and Christopher Collier. Jump Ship to Freedom. New York: Dell/Bantam/Doubleday, 1981, 198 pages. Slaves, Daniel Arbus and his mother live in Captain Ivers' house in Connecticut. Soldiers' notes, meant to buy their freedom, are taken by Mrs. Ivers and Daniel steals them back. He finds himself on a ship bound for the West Indies, and his plan is to jump ship in New York, where he is caught up in history. These authors have written other books, like War Comes to Willy Freeman.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. Bud, Not Buddy. New York: Scholastic, 1999, 243 pages. The novel is historical fiction, set in the 1930s during the Great Depression. Bud Caldwell is a foster child who finds himself in situations particular to the hard times when he runs away from the Amos Family. He visits "Hooverville" and travels by train; he makes rules for living along the way and meets a series of interesting characters. Eventually, he becomes a musician and learns about his real father.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963. New York: Scholastic, 1995, 210 pages. The trip of the "Weird Watsons" to Birmingham to visit Grandma is told through the eyes of ten-year old Kenny. The family is at an oddly wrong place, church, when four little girls are killed by a bomb. The book contains an epilogue with a concise history of the Civil Rights Movement and it is readable and enjoyable.

Davidson, Margaret. Frederick Douglass Fights For Freedom. New York: Scholastic, 1968, 79 pages. This short biography tells the story of Frederick Douglass by asking the essential questions: Why was he so famous? Why did people respect him so much? The book is easy to read and is suitable for upper elementary or middle school students.

Ehrlich, Amy (ed.) When I Was Your Age: Original Stories About Growing Up. Cambridge: Candlewick Press, 2001, 160 pages. Famous authors present stories from their childhood experiences that were significant to them as adults. The text varies in complexity, but is interesting for students and for adults. Other volumes are planned.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer. New York: Dell Publishing (Bantam/Doubleday), 1973, 127 pages. This historical novel for young people tells the story of Jessie Bollivar who is kidnapped from New Orleans and forced to play fife music so slaves can "dance" to keep their muscles strong in the hold of the

ship. The story is one of suspense and survival; readers will want to know what happens to Jessie and the slaves.

Giovanni, Nikki. Spin A Soft Black Song. New York: Scholastic, 1971, 57 pages. The poetry in the book is biographical, and some is dedicated to specific people. Most Students will enjoy the poems.

Greene, Bette. Philip Hall Likes Me I Reckon Maybe. New York: Scholastic, 1974, 135 pages. Beth Lambert, who lives in Pocahontas Arkansas, shares her rural life with readers: the Church picnic, the 4H competition, the cure for turkey thieves, and The Pretty Penny (girl power) Club. Her feelings and reactions are described in this realistic novel; she stands up for herself and overcomes every adversity except her allergies. This novel is interesting for younger middle school students.

Grimes, Nikki. Hopscotch Love. New York: Scholastic, 1999, 40 pages. The poetry is all about love and the family. It is suitable for all ages but the illustrations give this book a child-centered focus.

Guy, Rosa. The Friends. New York: Dell Publishing (Bantam/Doubleday), 1973, 185 pages. The novel, for young people, is about friendship, self-perception and self-knowledge. It tells the story of Phillisia Cathy, a student from the West Indies, and Edith Jordan, a social outcast; the book would interest older middle school students. The main character, Edith Jordan, also appears in other books by the same author.

Hamilton, Virginia. Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988, 193 pages. This expository text tells the story of Anthony Burns, a Virginia slave, who escaped to Boston in 1854. His struggle for freedom caused riots in the streets, and a trial was held. The extensive index in this book is helpful in understanding the Fugitive Slave Act.

Hamilton, Virginia. The House of Dies Drear. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968, 278 pages. The historical novel would appeal to older middle school students. It tells the story of an Underground Railroad Station House where Dies Drear and the two slaves he was hiding were murdered. The novel has a high level of suspense as the story of a black family caught in a dangerous situation is told.

Hamilton, Virginia. Zeely. New York: MacMillan Co., 1967, 97 pages. In this short novel, Zeely, who may be a ghost, imparts wisdom and historical facts to Elizabeth (Geeder) and her brother, John (Toeboy,) as they visit their Uncle's rural Farm. Younger middle school students would be interested in this book.

Haskins, James. Black Eagles: African Americans in Aviation. New York: Scholastic, 1995, 196 pages. The text is expository. It provides biographies of African-Americans from the pioneer stage of aviation through the space age. Other similar Books by the same author are: Get On Board: The Story of the Underground Rail Road and One More River to Cross.

Haskins, James. The Dream and the Struggle: Separate But Not Equal. New York: Scholastic, 1998, 184 pages. The text is straight-forward history and it explains the doctrine of “separate but equal” and the historical events involved. It is similar to other books by the same author, but in concentrates on the times rather than the people.

Hudson, Wade, and Cheryl Hudson (eds.) How Sweet the Sound. New York:Scholastic, 1995, 48 pages. The words to songs of the south are presented with excellent art work by Floyd Cooper. Similar works are cited in the “Recommended reading” list and the key elements of African-American music are also listed. The book is meant to provide a “glimpse at the history of Blacks in America through their music.”_

Hudson, Wade (ed.) Pass It On. New York: Scholastic, 1993, 32 pages. The over-size book is beautifully illustrated by Floyd Cooper. A variety of poets are represented. Most of the poetry would be suitable for memorization or a choral reading, but all of it is enjoyable._

Hughes, Langston. Selected Poems. New York: Random House/Vintage Books, 1987, 297 pages. Details on the Mississippi-born poet’s life are presented along with the poetry. Most middle school students would enjoy this text.

Jackson, Florence. Blacks In America: 1954-1979. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1980, 89 pages. The expository text is suitable for younger middle school students. The book presents historical events, illustrated by photography, and the Civil Rights struggle is discussed in an understandable way._

Johnson, James Weldon. Life Ev’ry Voice and Sing. New York: Scholastic, 1995, 15 pages. Music is provided, but the main focus of the text is the illustration of the the anthem. The illustrations are by Jan Spivey Gilchrist.

Johnston, Johanna. They Led the Way. New York: Scholastic, 1973, 126 pages. The epository text provides details on frontier American women, including Phillis Wheatley (pp. 22-40) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (pp. 80-86.)

Kulling, Monica. The Escape North: The Story of Harriet Tubman. New York: Scholastic, 2000, 48 pages. This is a “step three book” in a “step into reading” Series. It is well illustrated and presents Harriet Tubman’s biography in a straight-forward way.

Leeming, David and Jake Page (eds.) Myths, Legends and Folktales of America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 221 pages. The text contains everything from Creation Myths to mythical monsters and heroes and heroines of the new world. Any student with an interest in the topic would enjoy the book.

Lester, Julius. To Be A Slave. New York: Scholastic, 1968, 160 pages. The title of the Expository text indicates the content. Stories and quotations from slaves and ex- saves reveal the various aspects of

slavery as told to the members of the American Anti-Slavery Society (1870s) and the Federal Writer's Project (1930s.) The stories included are of two types: those conforming to literary conventions and those recorded to preserve speech patterns and language. Sources are provided and the text is organized around topics: to be a slave, the auction block, the plantation, resistance and emancipation. This is an excellent book for middle school students.

McGill, Alice. Miles' Song. New York: Scholastic, 2000, 212 pages. The novel is historical fiction, set in 1851. Miles is a twelve-year old slave who is sent to the "breaking ground" when he is accused of breaking house rules. He is befriended by Elijah, who knows how to read and who tells tales of the north. Miles is inspired to run away. The novel tells the whole story of his trek to freedom and is suitable for Middle school students.

McKissack, Patricia. Color Me Dark: The Diary of Nellie Lee Love, the Great Migration North. New York: Scholastic, 2000, 211 pages. The novel is part of the Dear America Series and it tells the story of a family migrating north around 1919. a similar novel, Clotee, A Slave Girl, by the same author, provides details of cultural history.

McKissack, Patricia. The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural. New York: Scholastic, 1993, 122 pages. The anthology touches on various aspects of the Southern story: slavery, the Ku Klux Klan, mysticism, Civil Rights, healers, modern times and supernatural beings. It is interesting and suitable for middle school students.

McKissack, Patricia and Frederick L. McKissack. Black Hands, White Sails. New York: Scholastic, 1999, 152 pages. The book is an expository account of the lives of African-American whalers during the nineteenth century (1803-1860.) Of the 3,198 blacks who held positions on ships, only one, William T. Shorey became a captain, although there were several all black whaling vessels. Students with an interest in history will enjoy the book.

McKissack, Patricia and Frederick L. McKissack. Sojourner Truth: Ain't I A Woman? New York: Scholastic, 1992, 186 pages. The biography tells Sojourner Truth's story set in the history of the times. It is one of a biography series that includes Harriet Tubman, Jesse Jackson, Malcolm X, Michael Jordan, Nelson Mandela and Jackie Robinson, among others.

Metzler, Milton (ed.) The Black Americans: A History in Their Own Words. New York: Thomas Crowell, 1964, 306 pages. Historical accounts are arranged in a logical way to present details from the arrival of the first slave ship to a speech by John E. Jack, president of the Urban League, in 1983.

Meyers, Walter Dean. Hoops. New York: Dell Publications, 183 pages. Lonnie Jackson, the main character in this novel, learns that outsiders have tried to influence his coach, Cal, into leaving him on the bench so that the team will lose the championship. The book describes the characters' lives and the game in a realistic way and would appeal to middle school students. Similar realistic novels by the same author, published by Harper Collins in 1989 and 1999, respectively, are: Scorpions (216 pages)

and Monster (281 pages.) Monster written in collaboration with the author's son, Christopher Myers, is told in the form of a television play that takes place in the narrator's mind as he is on trial. A more adult novel, which covers two hundred and fifty years of American history, focusing on one family is The Glory Field, published by Scholastic in 1994 (375 pages.) Because of content and realistic content, these books are more appropriate for older middle school students.

Monjo, F. N. Follow the Drinking Gourd. New York: Harper Trophy Books, 1973, 62 pages. The retelling of the Drinking Gourd story with some historical framework is suited for elementary school students, but would appeal to middle school students as a familiar tale.

Peck, Richard. A Year Down Yonder. New York: Scholastic, 2000, 131 pages. Although the book is the sequel to A Long Way from Home, this young adult novel can be read as a separate story. Mary Alice's sojourn with Grandma Doudel in a small town in 1937 provides an interesting picture of the times and of the place.

Robinet, Harriette G. Forty Acres and Maybe a Mule. New York: Scholastic, 1999, 132 pages. The historical novel, suitable for younger middle school students, tells the story of Pascal and his older brother, Gidon. They are ex-slaves, and they live during the Reconstruction period in the south when "night riders" try to take their farm and their freedom. Other similar books by the same author include: Mississippi Chariot, If You Please, Mr. Lincoln and Children of the Fire.

Spinelli, Jerry. Maniac McGee. New York: Scholastic, 1990, 184 pages. Even reluctant middle school readers enjoy the myth of Maniac McGee who runs away and finally comes home after some adventures on the East End of town.

Sterne, Emma G. The Long Black Schooner. Chicago: Follett Publishing, Inc., 1968, 192 pages. The historical novel tells the story of the voyage of the *Amistad* in 1839 which provided some of the inspiration for the anti-slavery movement. The book is easy to read and would appeal to middle school students.

Taylor, Mildred. The Friendship and The Gold Cadillac. New York: Bantam Books, 1989, 87 pages. Two novellas are contained in one text. In Friendship the Mississippi-born author tells the story of putting the friendship between a black farmer and a white storekeeper to the test. In The Gold Cadillac a family travels to Mississippi from Ohio in a gold Cadillac and encounters suspicion and mistrust because they are black. These stories would appeal to younger middle school students. Other books by the same author include: Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry, Let the Circle be Unbroken and Song of the Trees.

Woodson, Jacqueline. Miracle's Boys. New York: Scholastic, 2000, 133 pages. Adolescent identity is the focus as the author writes about the difficulties of childhood. Newcharlie, Ty'ree and several other characters face some realistic situations and challenges on the way to self-discovery. The book has become popular with older middle school students as a realistic reflection of the times.

Zeinert, Karen. The Amistad Slave Revolt and American Abolition. North Haven: Shoestring Press: A Linnet Book, 1997, 101 pages. The historical account is suitable for intermediate or middle school students. It contains good illustrations, an extensive bibliography, and a list of recommended books on the topic.

Publications for teachers

Abrahams, Roger D. African Folktales. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983, 352 pages. One of the Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Collection, this text includes tales of wonder, trickster tales, tales of praise for great doings, and tales about making one's way through life. The stories are often traced back to tribal roots, as well. This is an excellent source for stories and for background material.

Andrews, William L. "An Introduction to the Slave Narratives" in Documenting the American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002. The article provides historical perspective and other information about the topic.

Angelou, Maya. A Brave and Startling Truth. New York: Random House, 1995, 10 pages. The text is a poem read on June 26, 1995, at the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, in San Francisco; the author cites people as the "natural wonders" of the world.

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Random House, 1993, 246 pages. This book is one of the five autobiographical texts by the poet-author.

Bailey, Roger B. "A Brief Chronology of African-American Literature" in SAC Litweb, 2000. Available <http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/laframlit.htm>, February 20, 2002. The author's extensive listing is a good starting point for the study of African-American literature.

Baldwin, James. Go Tell It On the Mountain. New York: Dell Publishing, 1970, 221 pages. The autobiographical novel details a possible life choice of church or jail and how the condition of being black affects this choice. The book is interesting and can provide information on one viewpoint.

Battle, Kemp. Great American Folklore: Legends, Tales, Ballads and Superstitions from All Across America. New York: Doubleday and Co., 1988, 646 pages. The book is divided into types of stories: Traveler's Tales, Pioneer Tales, "Fightin' Spirit," Hunting and Fishing Yarns, Love and Marriage, Preachers and Their Congregations, Witches, Ghosts and Strange Events, Animal Tales, Country Life and Country Laughter, Wild, Wild West, Cowboys and Tall Tales. It does include stories from all parts of the United States. It describes United States folklore as "endless" and it is enjoyable and a good reference.

Binder, Mary. Book Review of Every Tongue Got to Confess by Zora Neale Hurston in the Pittsburgh City Paper, January 30-February 6, 2002. The author cites Hurston's influence on Alice Walker, Gayl Jones,

Gloria Naylor and Toni Cade Bambara with her “boiled down juice of human living.” It is interesting as background and as an opinion statement on Hurston’s writing.

Bing, Carter. “Literature” in The Drum Links, 2002. Available <http://drum.ncat.edu>, March 22, 2002. The Drum Links website has extensive information about African- American topics. The article on literature provides insight into literary development.

Binswanger, Barbara and Jim Charlton. On the Night the Hogs Ate Willie and Other Quotations on All Things Southern. New York: Penguin Books, 1994, 173 pages. This interesting little book has ideas that are mildly amusing, or hilarious or thought- provoking quotations on southern life including: being a southerner, Grits, Southern food, the Civil War, Black and white southerners, various states and Elvis.

Cahill, Susan(ed.) An Anthology of Women’s Writing from the Fourteenth Century to the Present. New York: Quality Paperback Books, 2002, 634 pages. The anthology contains biographical sketches of various authors, including Harriet Jacobs (Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl,) Frances E. W. Harper (Ellis,) and Zora Neale Hurston (How It Feels to Be Colored Me) and others which reflect searching for identity, the historical or political arena, and socio-economic shifts in society.

Calfee, Robert. The Inquiring School Model. Stanford: University Press, 1984, 190 pages. The text provides information on structuring inquiry based lessons for a variety of purposes. It is based on tenets of the psychology of learning and knowledge acquisition.

Chapman, Abraham (ed.) Black Voices. New York: Penguin/Putnam, 1968, 720 pages. This extensive anthology includes prose (fiction, autobiography and literary criticism,) poetry and biographical notes concerning forty-four African American authors. The introduction provides extensive information and the text is well organized.

Chideya, Farai. The Color of Our Future. New York: William Morrow, 1999, 273 pages. The text is a treatise by an ABC News correspondent; it focuses on the “next generation” of black, white, Latino, Asian and Native American youth and covers a range of issues: race, education, popular culture and politics.

Cleaver, Eldridge. Soul On Ice. New York: Dell Publishing, 1968, 210 pages. The book provides details on Cleaver’s thoughts on his life and times, including prison, the assassination of Malcolm X, Richard Wright, Viet Nam and women. The author published another book about ten years later called Soul On Fire.

Cohen, Amy. From Sea to Shining Sea: A Treasury of American Folklore and Folk Songs. New York: Scholastic, 1993, 700 pages. Tales from “the beginning” to “in our time” are presented in this beautifully illustrated collection. Aside from typical story categories, there are sections called “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” and “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad.” Within each category, various authors and antecedents are represented.

Cohen, Hennig. "Folklore" in Documenting the American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002. The article provides good basic background information on southern stories.

Delaney, Sarah L. and A. Elizabeth Delaney. Having Our Say. New York: Dell publishing, 1993, 299 pages. The first person text reveals the lives and the activities of the Delaney sisters from "Jim Crow days" through World War II, and up until their "shocking" one hundred and first birthday, when they had outlived "those nebbly boys." The book is good for background information, and it is interesting reading.

Drotning, Phillip T. A Guide to Negro History in the United States. New York: Doubleday, Inc., 1968, 245 pages. This is a standard history text which lists the historical occurrences for each state; states are listed in alphabetical order.

"From Africa to America" in The American Journey, 2002. Available <http://www2worldbook.com>, February 17, 2002. This encyclopedia entry is a good starting point with links to related topics.

Gates, Henry Louis (ed.) Black Literature and Literary Theory. New York: Methuen, Inc., 1984, 190 pages. The text presents Gates' theories of literature as inherent in African mythology and as a result of African-American authors revising African stories. According to this author, all African-American literature can be traced to Africa; literature was a survivor of "the middle passage."

Goss, Linda and Marian Barnes (eds.) Talk That Talk. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 521 pages. The two editors present two viewpoints: the performance storyteller and the heritage storyteller. The book is divided into sections: Animal Tales and Fables, History Remembered, Traditional and Contemporary Tales of Family and Home, Humorous Tales and Anecdotes, and Raps, Rhythms and Rhymes in the Storytelling Tradition. Each section in the book contains commentaries (essays) on the story category. A "further reading" list and an Index of Stories for Children is provided. The book is excellent as a Source of tales and as a resource.

Goss, Linda and Clay Goss (eds.) Jump Up and Say: A Collection of Black Storytelling. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995, 301 pages. Linda Goss is the official storyteller of Philadelphia, Pa., and the book is a scholarly and entertaining volume. The text is divided into sections which focus on common story themes: moral tales, freedom, families, rhythm talk, humor, protest and change, ghost stories and superstitions, and food. Each section contains quotations, stories or essays and poetry. The "further reading" section is divided into general suggestions and also by story type and according to age. Biographical notes are also provided and the text is an excellent resource as well as a good and entertaining read.

Greene, J. Lee. "Black Literature" in Documenting the American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002. The article provides information on black southern authors and the content of their work.

Halter, Marilyn. Shopping for Identity: The Marketing of Ethnicity. New York: Random House, 2000, 242 pages. The text provides a summary of how ethnic ideas and visual images have been used, and continue to be used to sell products. This is an interesting idea, because many advertisements are insidious in using this kind of sales tactic.

Hamilton, Rebecca and S. Sauer. "The Directed Reading Model" presented by C. Garrison and J. Fiorina, workshop sponsored by Pittsburgh Public Schools Teaching Learning and Assessment Division at South Hills Middle School, Pittsburgh, Pa., February 2, 2002.

Hamilton, Virginia. The People Could Fly. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993, 178 pages. The collection is divided into four sections to represent the main body of African-American folktales. Such tales were a creative way for an oppressed people to express themselves and the stories in this book have become part of the American tradition. Well known stories are contained in the book. The author has also published a companion volume with historical stories called Many Thousand Gone: African-Americans from Slavery to Freedom (1993, 152 pages.) Both books have very good illustrations and excellent resource material.

Harley, Sharon. The Timetables of African-American History. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995, 400 pages. The text is set up as a time line with a matrix. Column titles include: general history, education, laws and legal actions, religion, literature, the arts, science and medicine, and sports. It is easy to use and it has a very good index so that it is possible to find people or events quickly. Aside from using the book as a resource, it is an interesting book to browse through; some contemporary events are surprising.

Herskovits, Melville J. The Myth of the Negro Past. Boston: Beacon Press, 1958, 158 pages. According to this author, cultural traditions are traceable to Africa and are often found in African-American literature. As a resource, the text is limited, but it does state the basic concept that African stories are the source for many African-American tales in the oral tradition.

Hurston, Zora Neale. Mules and Men. New York: Harper Collins Perennial Classics, 1990, 309 pages. This is an anthropological collection of southern stories presented conversationally by the author. It is extensive and contains stories retold in other collections. Stories chosen for use with students would have to be carefully selected due to content and vocabulary. The book is a good basic resource.

Hurston, Zora Neale. Their Eyes Were Watching God. New York: Harper Perennial Classics, 1998, 219 pages. The novel is a "folk novel" with roots in the southern African-American oral tradition. The author tells Janie's story, set in the 1930s and the autobiographical tendency found in African-American literature is also present. The novel provides background information.

Johnson, Charles and Patricia Smith, and the WGBH Research Team. Africans in America: America's Journey Through Slavery. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1998, 494 pages. The text is a mixture of

history interspersed with fiction by Charles Johnson. It is organized into four sections: Terrible Transformation, Revolution, Brotherly Love and Judgment Day. The book is enhanced by footnotes and facsimile illustrations which include portraits and historical items like runaway slave posters. It is an excellent resource concerning the facts, and the spiritual climate, of slavery.

Johnson-Coleman, Lorraine. Just Plain Folks. Boston: Little, Brown Inc., 1998, 238 pages. This is a modern collection in the oral tradition; it features short stories, anecdotes and poetry divided into categories (Kinfolks, Homefolks, Men and Womenfolks, Young Folks, White Folks and Church Folks.) The southern author is sharing her own personal history and outlook, and the book is entertaining.

Kantor, Susan (ed.) One Hundred and One African-American Read-Aloud Stories. New York: Black Dog and Leventhal Publishers, 1998, 416 pages. The large anthology is divided into sections: Myths and Fables, Fairy Tales, Folk Tales, Friends and Helpers, Hawk and Chicken Tales, Rabbit Stories, Liar, Fool and Tall Tales, Biography and History, Slavery, Growing up and Songs and Poetry. The introduction contains information on reading aloud to children, the performance element, and refers to the tales as "classic." The book is an excellent source for stories in the oral tradition.

Killens, John O. and Jerry M. Ward. Black Southern Voices: An Anthology of Fiction, Poetry, Drama, Nonfiction, and Critical Essays. New York: Meridian Group/Penguin Books, 1992, 608 pages. The text is a comprehensive collection. It is a good, enjoyable text with excellent information about African-American literature and the specific selections and authors.

Lyons, Mary E. Raw Head, Bloody Bones: African-American Tales of the Supernatural. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991, 88 pages. Fifteen traditional, supernatural stories are collected in this volume for the purposes of reading aloud, dramatizing or enjoying individually. The introduction is well written and provides a good historical background for using the text, which would be suitable for middle school students.

McHenry, Elizabeth. "African American Literature" in *Literature*, 1998. Available <http://www.africana.com>, February 20, 2002. The author presents African-American literature in the United States as an outgrowth of history and the conditions of slavery.

Morrison, Toni. Song of Solomon. New York: Penguin Books, 1987, 337 pages. The novel contains references to many African motifs, including movement imagery, the family, and slavery.

Olorounto, Samuel B. "Studying African-American Literature in Its Global Context," 1992, VCCA Journal. Available <http://www.br.cc.va.us>, February 12, 2002. The scholarly article provides information about African cultural ties and traditions found in African-American tales and the oral tradition. It is a good resource on the structure of the stories.

Reed, John and Dale Reed. "Grit Lit: Writers and Literature" in *Anything Southern*, 2001. Available <http://anythingsouthern.com>, February 17, 2002. This overview of Southern literature

indicates some explanations for literary trends African-American literature. The style of the article is conversational, but it is an interesting source of information, as well.

Ridge, Kari K. "Hip Hop History" in READ Magazine, V. 51, number 13, 2/22/02, pp. 13-15. Although the article is written for students, it contains some interesting background information for teachers on the role of the African storyteller and a quick review of common terms used in today's rhymes and raps.

"Tell About the South: Voices in Black and White," Public Broadcasting System WQED, Pittsburgh, February 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2002, A James Agee Film Project, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1999. The program was interesting and informative. Over the course of several weeks, southern writers were profiled, relationships among writers were detailed, and historical events were discussed as relating to the author's lives and works. Concepts involving the specific reactions of writers to the Civil War, opposing views among writers and the various opinions of both black and white writers were often presented through interviews with the authors, themselves. Photographs and film footages added to the sense of history, and although each portion of the program was interesting, it was also a "note-taking" occasion. Video cassettes may be purchased at www.ageefilms.org.

Toomer, Jean. Cane. New York: W.W. Norton Co., 1988, 117 pages, with additional letters and literary criticism, 246 pages. In this particular volume, the background information covers more pages than the actual novel. It is interesting, however, to read what W.E.B. DuBois and other authors thought of the book. The text contains poetry and refers to conditions for African-Americans in the south. It is one of the texts which concerns migration, but it is the result of Toomer's migration to the south in search of his own identity, and his return to the north. It reflects the time in which it was written and it echoes back to slavery and the pain of the individual.

Wamba, Phillippe. Kinship: A Family's Journey in Africa and America. New York: Penguin/Putnam, 1999, 382 pages. The book tells the story of the author's extended family and his journey back to Zaire; he reacquaints himself with his own personal history. Although it may seem odd, this was a book that was difficult to put down. The author recounted events and activities in his life and the history of his family in an emotional, personal and interesting way. The book is an excellent look at one family's experience.

Willis, Deborah. Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers from 1940 to the Present. New York: W.W. Norton, Inc., 1999, 348 pages. The text is divided into time segments. There is explanatory text which details the lives and the specialities of the photographers within the historic time frame, but the photographs speak for themselves.

Wilson, Charles and William Ferris. "Literature in the American South" in Documenting The American South, 1998, updated February 11, 2002. Available <http://docsouth.unc.edu>, February 15, 2002. Information on southern writers, including African-American authors, is presented in this article.

Wright, Richard. Uncle Tom's Children. New York: Harper Perennial Classics, 1993, 301 pages. The text is a short story cycle, united by the theme of suffering for those descendents of 'Uncle Tom.' This particular volume presents biographical information on the author and the times in which he lived; it is a good resource for historical context.

Wright, Richard. Native Son. New York: Harper and Rowe, 1966, 398 pages. In this early novel about social conditions, the author tells the story of Bigger Thomas, a man headed for prison, and a victim of his historical time frame. The novel has become a classic, and modern readers often study it as a literary prototype of the social protest novel.

Appendix: Information for use with the curriculum unit, specific lesson plans and Content Standards

Information for use with the curriculum unit

Websites for student research on the south and African-American literature

Other suitable sites may be substituted; students may use Encarta and general search engines to find out about specific stories or authors.

<http://www2.worldbook.com>

<http://docsouth.unc.edu>

<http://www.usc.edu>

<http://drum.ncat.edu>

<http://www.contemporarylit.about.com/cs/africanamerican>

<http://lib.rochester.edu.ref/afric-am.html>

<http://manta.library.colostate.edu>

<http://www.africana.com>

<http://www.anythingsouthern.com>

<http://www.accd.edu/sac/english.bailey/afamlit.htm>

<http://sjcpl.lib.in.us/homepage/ChildSrv/AFRICANAMLIST.html>

<http://www.sc.edu/library/spcoll/kidlit/baker.html>

Specific Lesson Plans

Inquiring School Model Script (Calfee)/Directed Reading Model (Hamilton and Sauer) Lesson 1 and 2,
Day 1 Grade Seven

Text: The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural and selected anthologies.

Content Standards: Communications 2 and 4; Technology 9; Citizenship 7 and 8; Arts and Humanities 2 and 3.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program focus (areas of interaction): approaches to learning and *homo faber*.

Objective: The student will examine and discuss the idea of Southern identity and will be able to categorize selected stories from the African-American oral tradition as belonging to specific sub-groups; students will be able to explain and define the attributes of the stories as presented by the instructor or as found through research and as measured by a cooperatively generated oral presentation.

Opening: content, purpose, process and visual structure.

In the library and/or computer lab, students are directed to engage in research using the current procedures to answer research questions. The instructor will provide basic information using maps and story samples.

Research questions on “the South:”

What does being “southern” mean? Where is “the south?” Why is “the south” important in our history?

Research questions on the oral tradition:

What are “slave narratives?”

From where did these and other stories come? What kinds of stories do we find in literature today?

Process: individual research and an oral presentation after cooperative discussion (roles: leader, recorder,

reporter and materials handler.)

Middle: prior knowledge, active participation, visual structure and practice.

Students use the websites list, one of the selected texts, and a variety of resources to answer the research questions. Other questions may be added as students begin to find information. Students take notes using one of the visual organizers such as a web, matrix, topical net, venn diagram, T chart or an organizer of their own.

Thirty to forty minutes will be spent in research and cooperative discussions with the instructor circulating to facilitate accountable talk among each of the eight groups. Each group will report information and findings will be recorded on chart paper; this requires about twenty to thirty minutes.

Additional/ "thought" questions: What makes these stories "southern?" What do these stories tell us?

Closing.Follow-up: What, why, how and when?

Process review questions:

What did we study today? Why did we look at "the south" and southern stories? How did we analyze the stories? When could you use this process again (research?)

Follow-up activity: Consider one of the thought questions within your group and write your consensus on your summary paper.

Lesson 1 and 2, Day 2

Opening: content, purpose, process and visual structure.

Students continue to work at the research site. The instructor will organize by describing the activity and the parameters of the research.

Cooperative activity: Students examine selected stories for defining characteristics; each group is using one of the selected texts.

Process:

1. Group members examine the stories assigned from the selected text and arrive at consensus concerning story characteristics for fables, stories about slavery, family and friends, humorous stories, rhythms and rhymes, and supernatural stories. Characteristics may be listed, or another visual organizer may be chosen.
2. Supernatural stories are examined for characteristics particular to the sub-genre.

(roles: leader, recorder, reporter and materials handler.)

Middle: prior knowledge, active participation, visual structure and practice.

Students will use previous research, one of the selected texts and the group process to come to consensus about story characteristics and generate a visual organizer. This takes about thirty minutes. Each group will also discuss supernatural stories found in the sample text. This activity requires about fifteen minutes. After a brief oral presentation of the group consensus, requiring about twenty minutes, individual students will have the opportunity to examine the text, The Dark-Thirty, and note consistencies among the stories by predicting from the story titles. Students will be asked to consider the southern nature of the stories and to note their thoughts on paper.

(All papers are kept in individual folders at each table.)

Closing/Follow-up: What, why, how and when?

Process review questions:

What did we study today? What did you learn about? Why did we look at stories from the African-American oral tradition? Why are these stories "southern?" How do the story categories (or individual stories) relate to African-American history? How are these tales similar? Different? How did you decide on a story category?

When can you use the same process again (research and discussion)?

Follow-up activities:

Write a letter to someone you know and explain what you have learned about African-American stories. (This requires that the student review letter writing and the information they have about the stories; letters will be collected and displayed.)

Write and illustrate your own folktale. (Original stories are collected and displayed.)

Reporting/Data Sheet

Cooperative Activity

Story title:

Group:

Story type:

The text we are using is:

The story is southern because:

Research: Types of stories

-

Folktales, moral tales or myths: These stories may have talking animals and they always teach something about how people should act, about how the world works or about how some natural phenomena occurred.

Historical stories: These stories are most often related to slave narratives, but they may also concern more modern historical events. These stories are based in a factual occurrence, but they are usually realistic narratives (fiction.)

Family and friends stories: These stories explain relationships among family members or among friends. They may be realistic or they may contain strong elements of fantasy.

Humorous tales: These stories have strong elements of humor. They may fit easily into another story category. The humor may come from one character fooling another.

Rhymes and rhythms: These stories are told in rhyme, or they may contain strong poetic elements. They may be ballads or songs. They are often related to historical events or to explanations of events in every-day life.

Supernatural stories: These stories concern strange events. They may contain witches, ghosts, monsters or other supernatural beings. They may be set in any time period, and may seem realistic, except for the supernatural element.

Notes or questions:

Inquiring School Model Script (Calfee)/Directed Reading Model (Hamilton and Sauer)
Lessons 3 through 12 Grade 7

Text: The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural, "The Legend of Pin Oak," pp. 3-16.

Content Standards: Communications 2 and 4; Citizenship 7 and 8; Arts and Humanities 2 and 3.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program focus (areas of interaction): approaches to learning and *homo faber*.

Objective: The student will examine supernatural stories in the text and relate the story to events in African-American history as measured by class discussion and the successful completion of a student-selected activity.

Opening:

Visual: Venn diagram

Introduction: characteristics of narrative and expository writing.

Today we'll read a story that reflects the nation's historic past. The story is called "supernatural" so it will contain elements of realism and elements of fantasy. (Review previous research, if necessary.)

Present selected vocabulary using the "Picture It!" method (Instructor provides a memorable word picture) or a Power Point presentation: plantation, resentment, acceptance, dreary, renege, miraculously.

Modeled writing: Editorial

Essential question: Why does slavery exist?

(Students may not realize that slavery still exists in other parts of the world.) Instructor models writing an editorial using the overhead projector.

This story concerns slavery (p. 3, introduction to the story.) Why would we want to read about this topic? Why is it important? What can you predict from the title? Why do you think it might be a “southern” story?

We can use a visual structure to help us analyze the story as we read it. Discuss possible graphic organizers: story map, Venn diagram, etc. and

decide which organizer will be used.

Middle:

Read pp. 3-16 aloud with students in small groups or as a whole group activity. Continue with the following visual structures: Story map for content or Venn diagram for the two characters.

Sample Directed Reading Model Questions:(Questions will vary depending on student responses to the reading.)

- Segment 1, pp. 3-4. What do you think Henri means when he says “Do you want to destroy Pin Oak?”
- Segment 2, pp. 4-5. Why do you think Harper was so eager for his father’s acceptance?(Will he gain acceptance when he comes to live with his father?)
- Segment 3, pp.5-7. Is Amanda right? What do you think about this?
- Segment 4, pp. 7-8. Why wouldn’t Henri leave?
- Segment 5, p. 8. What did Amos want to tell him?
- Segment 6, p. 8. What did Mr. Kelsey mean? What do you think about this?
- Segment 7, pp. 9-11. What is Harper’s problem? What did you think would happen?
- Segment 8, pp. 11-14. What do you think happened to them?
- Segment 9, pp. 14-16. What do you think of the historical record?

Post reading/discussion: Who can summarize the tale?

Revisiting vocabulary: Syllasearch or other...

Closing/Follow-up:

What did we examine today? Why did we analyze the story? How can the story help our understanding of history? What history, or whose history is involved in this tale? When could

be use the visual structure again? (Summarizing) Was your prediction about the story correct? Why is this a supernatural story? Why is it a “southern” story?

Follow-up activities:

Optional activities

- Write your own “ghost story” about the same or a similar topic.
Retell the story from a different viewpoint as a realistic story or as a fantasy.
Retell the story as a short dramatization.
Write a list of things you’d still like to know...

Suggested activity

Response writing:

Editorial: Essential question-Why does slavery exist?

(Portfolio Connection: Reading Exhibit 1, Response to Literature or Writing Exhibit 3, Persuasive Essay for Grades 7 and 8.) Editing: Group activity. Flexible grouping: 2-4 students per table.

Lesson 4, pp. 17-21, “We Organized”

Opening:

Visual: Venn Diagram or T chart

Introduction: poetry (word map) This poem continues our examination of our history. It is about slavery.

Present the selected vocabulary using the “Picture It!” method or a Power Point presentation: Massa, lilacs, powerful, hornets, chanting, narrative

Modeled writing: poetry. The instructor models rhyming words and how a poem can be constructed.p. 17; introduction to the poetry.

Day 4

Middle:

Review student research on slave narratives; refer to the text To Be a Slave by Julius Lester. Continue with the Venn diagram or chart as the poem is read for the first time.

Rereading: Sample Directed Reading Model questions
Segment 1, pp. 17-19. What do you think of this poem?
Segment 2, pp. 19-21. What do you think happened?
Post reading activity: Group consensus-retelling of the poem.
Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or some other format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What did we learn about today? Why did we examine this poem? What did the poem tell us about the people of the time? How does this poem add to our understanding of history? Could this poem have only been written by a southerner? Why or why not? What did you think of the mental picture the poem gave you? When can you use the visual structure again? (making comparisons)

Follow-up activities:

Optional activities

Group poem (various types of poetry can be presented as poetic forms for students to use.)
Retell the story in prose format.
Essay topic: How the slaves were like hornets...

Suggested activity

Response writing: Individual, original poem on a similar topic.
Editing: group sharing of poetry; revisions, final copy.
Grouping: 3-5 students per table.

Lesson 5, pp. 22-34 "Justice"

Opening:

Word web: Justice

This supernatural story tells about a famous hate group which we know about from history, and, which, unfortunately, is alive and well today.

Selected vocabulary will be presented through immersion, one word per group, followed by a brief group report: consciousness, dreading, lynching, groggily, ludicrous, extensions, confession, hysterical.

Modeled writing: Essay (The instructor models the writing process using the overhead projector.)
Essential question: What is justice?

p. 22, background information. This is a story about truth and justice. Why do we want to read this story? Why do you think this might be a "southern" story?

We can use a visual structure called a theme web to analyze the story as we read it.

Present the theme web. Allow time for individual silent reading of the story. (Reading 1)

Day 5

Middle:

(Reading 2) Continue theme web as each segment is read aloud, pausing for Directed Reading Model questions. Sample questions (Questions will vary depending on the direction of the discussion):

- Segment 1, pp.22-23. What do/did you think about Riley Holt's accident?
- Segment 2, pp. 23-24. What was your prediction? Do you think Alvin was lying? How do you know? Segment 3, pp. 24-26. The story is about history, but these two men "have a history." What do you think about it?
- Segment 4, pp. 26-27. Why wouldn't Hoop stop? (Is this an example of racism?)
- Segment 5, pp. 27-28. What do you think about what happened to Alvin?
S
- Segment 6, pp. 28-29. What are your thoughts on "the way things are" as an excuse?
- Segment 7, pp. 29-32. What do you think is happening to Hoop?
- Segment 8, pp. 32-34. What is haunting Hoop?
- Segment 9, pp. 34. What do you think about this supernatural kind of justice?

Post reading: Who can tell this story from Alvin's point of view? From Hoop's point of view?

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or some other format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What kind of story did we read today? Why did we read it? How did the story add to your understanding of history? When can you use the same visual structure again? (Examining a theme or a concept)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

- Retell the story in a narrative poem.
- Write an informational report on the Ku Klux Klan or on this historical time period.
- Write an essay entitled: "What is truth?"
- Use another visual organizer to explain/analyze the story.

Suggested activity: Response writing

Essay: What is justice? (Portfolio connection: Reading Exhibit 1, Response to Literature, Writing Exhibit 3, Persuasive Essay, Grades 7 and 8.)

Editing: Partner editing; read and respond

Flexible grouping: 3-4 students in each group.

Lesson 6, p. 35-42, "The 11:59"

Opening:

List: Review characteristics of a narrative story.

Today we will examine another story related to history. This story is related to a specific time in the south.

Selected vocabulary will be presented through the "Picture It!" process or in a Power Point presentation: original, fledgling, chided, restraint, mesmerizing, berths.

Modeled writing: narrative story (first person) The instructor will model writing a story using the overhead projector. Reference: other stories students have read.

p. 35, background information and newspaper article on the unionization of African-American porters.

This is a story about an old train man. One question you may want to consider concerns the story's southern roots. Why is this story southern? The main character is very important to this story. We can use a character matrix to help us understand the story.

Present character matrix.

Day 6

Middle:

(Reading 1) As you read the story silently, consider the question: Why is it called "The 11:59" instead of "Ghost Train?"

Cooperative activity: Complete the character matrix as a small group activity. After a report of consensus from each of 8 groups, briefly discuss the thought question.

(Reading 2) Sample Directed Reading Model questions. (Questions will vary ...)

- Segment 1, pp. 35-36. What do you think about Lester's former job? Would he have liked it?
- Segment 2, pp. 36-37. What do you think about the ghost story? Is it typical? Is it like other stories you have read before?
- Segment 3, pp. 38-39. What is your prediction?
- Segment 4, pp. 39-41. What do you think of Lester's precautions?
- Segment 5, p. 42. Why do you think Lester sees a train?
- Segment 6, p. 42. What is the supernatural element, here?

Post reading: Who can summarize the story using the character matrix?

Review vocabulary: Syllable search or some other format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What kind of a story is this? Why did we read this story? Is this a "southern" story? How is this story connected to history? What did you learn about Lester's personality? How did you know what kind of person he was? When can you use the character matrix again? (When characterization is important to the story.) (If the main character were different, would the story be different?)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

Write a summary of the story.

Write a narrative poem which tells the tale (or a song, or a rap...)

Illustrate the sequence of the story.

Write an informative article about the struggles of African-American porters and railroad workers.

Use a different visual to analyze the story.

Suggested activity: Response writing/Speaking

Oral tradition: Tell a ghost story of your own in your small group; feedback discussion: Does it fit the category? (Portfolio Connection: Speaking Exhibit 1.) Write your own ghost story. (Portfolio Connection: Writing Exhibit 1, Narrative Account.)

Editing: peer editing in small group

Flexible grouping: 2-4 students per group.

Lesson 7, pp. 44-54, "The Sight"

Opening:

Word web: sight

Today's story has both southern and historical connections, along with a supernatural focus. The story deals with a southern superstition.

Selected vocabulary will be presented through the "Picture It!" process or group discussion, one work per table/group: rascal, furlough, billowing, trance, acceleration, adrenaline, collapsed, assured.

Modeled writing: See previous lesson.

p. 44, background information, with additional information from magazine article.

This story is about a supernatural gift and how it was used. Because there are several parts to this story, we can use a sequence visual called "falling dominoes" to analyze the story as we read it. (A T chart may also be used: youth/adulthood.)

Present the visual organizer.

Lesson 7

Middle:

(Reading 1) Read the story orally as a small group activity. Complete the visual structure. Each group will briefly present their work.

(Reading 2) Sample Directed Reading Model questions. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 44-45. What do you think about "the sight?"
- Segment 2, pp. 45-46. Would you like to have this gift? How did it get Esau into trouble? Would you be able to handle it?
- Segment 3, p. 4. Were Talls expectations fair?
- Segment 4, pp. 47-48. Were you sad for Esau when he lost his gift of sight?
- Segment 5, pp. 48-52. What do you think about Esau's life as an adult? His accomplishments? How did he feel about his sight returning? How would you feel?
- Segment 6, pp. 52-54. What do you think about the supernatural element in the story?
- Segment 7, p. 54. What did Charity Rose mean when she said, "I heard you?"

Post reading: Who can summarize the story...Option: Order the sequence of events in pictures of the story.

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or some other format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What did we read about today? Why did we read this story? How did we analyze it? What made this story “supernatural?” Is this a southern story? When can you use the visual structure again? (Sequence of events.)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

- Write a summary of the events of the story.
- Write a narrative poem.
- Illustrate the sequence of the tale.
- Write an informative report on the superstition.
- Write an informative report on midwives.
- Use a different visual structure to analyze the story.

Suggested activity: Response writing/Speaking

Tell as story of your own in the same genre. Write your own narrative story. (Portfolio Connection: Writing Exhibit 1, first person narrative or Speaking Exhibit 1.)

Editing: partner editing within small group.

Flexible grouping: 2-4 students per group.

Lesson 8, pp. 55-65, “The Woman in the Snow” Day 8

Opening:

Word Web: Civil Rights

This story, from the south, is more modern, but it still relates to history and it also reflects a supernatural focus.

Selected vocabulary will be presented using immersion with one word per group/table. Each group will report briefly on the word: obesity, chauffeur, desperation, boycott, integrated, compassion, power, fretted.

Modeled writing: Song, poem, ballad or rap. The instructor will model one or more of the forms using the overhead projector.

p. 55, background; additional background from personal history.

This story is about the abuse of power and the supernatural element tells what can happen when power or control is used inappropriately.

We can use a visual called a T chart to analyze the story. (Options: matrix weave or analysis of setting.)

Present the visual.

Middle:

(Reading 1) The story will be read silently or with a partner within the group; the T chart or other visual will be presented.

(Reading 2) Sample Directed Reading Model questions. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 55-56. What's going on here?
- Segment 2, pp. 56-57. What do you think about Grady's conversation?
- Segment 3, pp. 57-60. What do you think the author wants us to know about history?
- Segment 4, pp. 60-61. What do you think is haunting Grady? (his father and the woman)
- Segment 5, pp. 61-62. What's the author trying to say?
- Segment 6, pp. 63-64. What's going on here? Who is the woman in the snow?
- Segment 7, pp. 64-65. What happened to Eula Mae? What do you think about the supernatural element? (author's technique)

Post reading: Who can compare and contrast the two time frames in this story?

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or game format review.

Closing/Follow-up:

What kind of a story did we read today? Why did we read it? How does it relate to history? (How does it reflect history or changing times?) What did the author tell us? When can we use the visual again?

(Reading 2) We can complete the character matrix as we reread and discuss the story. Sample Directed Reading Model questions. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 66-68. Why does Jonie want a brother who is “ the same as her?”
- Segment 2, pp. 68-70. What does the author want us to know about Madame Zinnia?(How do you know?)
- Segment 3, pp. 70-72. What happened to Josie’s idea about having a brother?
- Segment 4, pp. 72-73. What’s going on here?
- Segment 5, pp. 73-74. What do you think about the idea of revenge? (Is Josie being a typical kid?)
- Segment 6, pp. 74-76. What’s happened to Josie’s wish now?
- Segment 7, pp. 76-77. What’s the author telling us here?
- Segment 8, p. 77. What do you think of the supernatural element in this story?

Post reading: Who (group) can summarize the story using the character matrix.

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or game format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What did we read today? Why did we read this story? What was the author trying to tell us about choices, or wishes? How does this story relate to history? When can you use the character matrix again? (When characters are important or to compare characters)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

- Draw a picture of one part of the story that features Adam.
- Write a ‘conjure’ poem.
- Write a “spell” for some good magic.
- Use an alternative visual to analyze the events of the story.
- Write about a harmless “charm” or superstition you like.

Suggested activity: Response writing

Essay: (choice of topic)

Editing: peer critique; revision.

Flexible grouping: 3-4 students per group.

Lesson 10, pp. 78-94, “Boo Mamma.”

Opening:

Theme web: sasquatch, or Hairy Man

Word web: activist

The story concerns the unknown.

Thought question: How do people react when faced with the unknown?

Selected vocabulary will be presented using the “Picture It!” process: conveniences, tracked, investigation, frustration, rummaging, developmental.

Modeled writing: The instructor will model and review narrative and expository writing (paragraph) using the overhead projector.

p. 78, background and personal experience; reaction to the events of the late 1960s.

This southern story deals with an alternative reality, as do most supernatural stories. Something to think about: Why do legends about monsters rise up in every culture? We can use a visual called a story graph to analyze this tale.

Present visual organizer.

Day 10

Middle:

(Reading 1) The story will be read as a partner activity and story graphs will be completed and displayed.

(Reading 2) Sample Directed Model Reading questions. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 78-79. What’s going on here?
- Segment 2, p. 78. What is the author telling us about history?
- Segment 3, pp. 79-80. What do you know about Leddy’s frustration?

- Segment 4, pp. 80-81. What do you think has happened?
- Segment 5, pp. 81-82. What does this part tell us about Leddy's character?
- Segment 6, pp. 82-83. What do you think the author is trying to tell us?
- Segment 7, pp. 83-84. What do you think of the supernatural element here?
- Segment 8, pp. 84-86. What's going on here?
- Segment 9, pp. 86-87. What do you think will happen next?
- Segment 10, pp. 87-88. What do you think has happened to Nealy?
- Segment 11, pp. 88-91. What is the author trying to say to us here about people?
- Segment 12, pp. 92-93. What do you think of Leddy's decision? (Given her character, is it understandable?)
- Segment 13, pp. 93-94. Why did the author tell this story?

Post reading: Using the story graph, who can summarize the main events of the story?

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or game format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What kind of a story did we read today? Why did we read it? How did we analyze it? What does it mean? How did the main character make decisions? Did her decision surprise you? What does this story have to do with history? How had "history" affected this character? When can you use a story graph again? (review/summarize the events in a story.)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

- Draw the sequence of the story.
- Write a paragraph about the author's purpose.
- Use an alternative visual to analyze the tale.
- Write a narrative poem or ballad to tell the story.

Suggested activity: Response writing

Write a narrative story or an expository, persuasive essay on the same topic. (Portfolio Connection: Writing Exhibit 5, Free choice or Writing Exhibit 3: Persuasive essay.)

Editing: peer editing, small group; revision.

Flexible grouping: 3-4 students per group.

Lesson 11, pp.95-110, “The Gingi.”

Opening:

Word web: malevolence (large group)

Evil takes form in this southern tale about good and bad forces.

Selected vocabulary will be presented through the “Picture It!” process or by immersion, one word per group with a brief report: charm, amulet, *objet d’art*, conviction, surreal, presence, Dobobo, recoiled, meddler

Modeled writing: The instructor will model writing an essay. Essential question: Why do people use charms to ward off evil? Alternative question: What is evil? Why does it exist?

p. 95, background information , charm or amulet.

How can you protect yourself against evil? What if you don’t recognize it? We can use a visual called a topical net to help us analyze the story. Optional graphic organizers: hierarchy or web.

Present visual organizer.

Day 11

Middle:

(Reading 1) Students will read the story silently and individually.

(Reading 2) Reread the story and complete the visual organizer as Directed Reading Model questions are discussed. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 95-97. What do you think about Laura’s vision? (Is it like Esau’s second sight?)
- Segment 2, pp. 97-99. What does the author want us to know?
- Segment 3, p. 99. What’s got into the cat?
- Segment 4, p. 99. What do you think about this dangerous situation?
- Segment 5, pp. 102-103. Is this like a bad dream? What should Laura do?
- Segment 6, p. 103. What is the supernatural element?

- Segment 7, pp. 103-105. Who is speaking to Laura?
- Segment 8, pp. 105-107. Why is Laura reluctant to believe? How do you think you'd react?
- Segment 9, pp. 107-108. What's going on here?
- Segment 10, pp. 108-110. Could this all be explained logically? (Is there an explanation that does not rely on the supernatural?)
- Segment 11, p. 110. What does the author want us to know from this entry? (author's purpose) Why is this a southern story?

Post reading: What is your opinion of this tale?

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or game format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What kind of story did we read today? Why did we read it? How does the story relate to history? Does the story illustrate the "eternal struggle between good and evil?" What or who represents "good?" Who or what is evil? Can evil or good be disguised in real life? Explain. What did we use to help us analyze the story? When can you use the same visual again? (information on the same topic; parts of a story)

Follow-up: Optional activities

- Design your own charm or amulet, or your own superstition.
- Write about a charm you own.
- Write a narrative story about someone who believes in the power of a charm.
- Write a narrative story about the struggle between good and evil.
- Retell this story in the form of a song, ballad or rap; perform it for your peers.

Suggested activity: Response writing (essay) Topics: What is evil? Why does it exist? Why do people have and use good luck charms? How can you protect yourself against evil? Agree or disagree: Belief is stronger than a charm or amulet. Agree or disagree: Evil needs an invitation. (Portfolio Connection: Writing Exhibit 3, Persuasive essay.) Peer editing within the flexible (2-4 person) group; revisions.

Lesson 12, pp.111-112, "The Chicken Coop Monster"

Opening:

Word web: monster (whole group)

In this final story, the author has written in an autobiographical way about her own supernatural experience.

Selected vocabulary will be presented using the "Picture It!" process or a Power Point presentation: ordinary, engulfed, impatience, unsuspecting, purposefully, bloodcurdling, devoured, sassing.

Modeled writing: The instructor will model one of the following writing tasks: an autobiographical story, a personal narrative or a problem/solution story.

p. 111; introductory information (Reference to foreshadowing.)

In this supernatural story, the chicken coop monster is very real to the nine year old narrator. We can use an events list to help us analyze this southern tale.

Present list visual.

Day 12

Middle:

(Reading 1) Students will read the story as partners or within a small group; the visual will be completed and presented.

(Reading 2) Sample Directed Reading Model questions. (Questions will vary...)

- Segment 1, pp. 111-114. Why do you think the author is telling us her personal history? Why does she have all of these “rules?”
- Segment 2, pp. 114-116. What’s going on here? What is this character’s problem?
- Segment 3, pp. 116-117. Where does the monster get power?
- Segment 4, pp. 117-118. What do you think of the “evidence?”
- Segment 5, p. 119. What does the author mean when she talks about Daddy James and his way of saying things?
- Segment 6, p. 120. What strategy is Daddy James using to deal with the monster?
- Segment 7, pp. 120-121. What do you think of the story he tells?
- Segment 8, pp. 122-123. What finally has banished the monster? (courage?) (love?)

Post reading: Who can summarize the story and what we have learned from it?

Review vocabulary: Syllasearch or game format.

Closing/Follow-up:

What did we read today? Why did we read it? Why have we been studying supernatural stories. What makes this(or other stories) “southern?” What are the characteristics of a supernatural story? Of a southern story? Why is this story autobiographical? What is the author saying about herself? What does the author want to tell us? How does this story reflect history? How does it (or other stories) reflect the African-American oral tradition? What did we use to analyze the story? When can you use the visual again? (sequence or story details)

Follow-up activities: Optional activities

- Write a song, poem, ballad or rap about the monster.
- Write about your own “monster.”
- Write an essay: Why do we all have a monster in the closet?
- Use a different visual to analyze the tale.

Suggested activity: Response writing

Write your own personal narrative or problem /solution selection. (Portfolio Connection: Writing Exhibit 1 or 3.)

Editing: Partner editing within the flexible group of 2-4 students; revisions.

Content Standards

Communications Standards: reading, writing, speaking and listening

- (2) All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
- (3) All students write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform and persuade, in all subject areas.

Science and Technology

- (9) All students demonstrate basic computer literacy, including word processing, software applications, and the ability to access the global information infrastructure, using current technology.

Citizenship

- (7) All students demonstrate their skills of communication, negotiating and cooperating with others.
- (8) All students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.

Arts and Humanities

- (2) All students evaluate and respond critically to works from the visual and performing arts and literature of various individuals and cultures, showing that they understand important features of the works.
- (3) All students relate various works from the visual and performing arts and literature to the historical and cultural context within which they were created.