

## **Their Stories/My Stories**

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### **Overview**

This unit is designed to be a part of the culmination of 7<sup>th</sup>-graders study, to be taught as Unit 9 in Pittsburgh Public Schools' Communications curriculum. Students will use their experience with various writing genres to explore multiple ways of learning and reporting on history, including that of their families and community. Students will conduct research, including oral history conversations, from various sources, and compare the information and perspectives they find. Students will learn the power of story, seek story from others, and develop and present story from their own lives.

This unit continues and builds upon Pittsburgh Public School's 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Communications Curriculum Unit 8, in which students study Mildred D. Taylor's historical novel, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. In the course of that study, these students will have deepened their acquaintance with historical fiction as a genre, and built connections with historical writing and research as parallel and corollary sources. This current unit will continue and deepen the goal of broadening students' appreciation and understanding of a particular historical period and its contribution to our present time, as well as of the varied and mutually-reinforcing ways to approach historical inquiry and writing.

The unit which follows is designed to build on any curriculum in which students have been encouraged to look at multiple writing genres as sources of information both about real people, and fictional people whose lives reflect the real world. It is presented here, to be taught to students in grade 7 or 8, as an intensive 6-week course, but it can be adapted for other uses. It is written as a complement to the current Pittsburgh Public Schools Core Curriculum for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, to augment the current units 8 and 9, designed to be taught during the final report period of 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Lessons are presented to fit double-period blocks (approximately 90-100 minutes) but could be adapted to different time frames. The number and length of lessons can be adapted to meet varying needs.

## Rationale

Pittsburgh Public Schools' current middle-school-level Communications curriculum begins to introduce students to our rich oral-tradition heritage. A 7<sup>th</sup>-grade unit on folktales, myths and legends in the spring ends with students creating their own story in this tradition. Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* brings students a step closer to seeing how real people in the world in which we live, in times and circumstances not terribly far removed from our own, have used story to preserve and pass on history, and to make it fun to learn.

This current unit is designed to build on those experiences, turning the focus to our own community and our own rich history. My primary goal is to help our young people recognize the value of their own traditions and the experiences that have made our city and our lives what they are, by discovering the real stories that surround them, as yet untold – including those that belong to and will come from the students themselves. Simultaneously, the students will use the multitude and variety of resources available to us to explore Pittsburgh's history, with a particular focus on African American life, and the experiences of other ethnic groups, especially those represented in the classroom and school. For many, if not most, this will be the start of a new journey. Many have never heard stories about their own families or the adults who make up their communities. Most suffer from our culture's dearth of meaningful oral exchange.

As I noted in a previous PTI unit, "Television, movies, video games, and internet connections seem to have replaced what once was the richest source of information for humans – story telling, sitting together and telling and hearing where things came from and how things used to be, and dreaming together of how things could be in a better world. For most of my students family history, and history in general, are gray areas of far less interest than items of popular culture they share with their peers. I find this trend alarming -- indeed, frightening. It epitomizes for me a process of desocialization of our young people, of atomization, of creating human beings whose sense of connection with one another is minimal, and often confrontational. This loss of story is a loss of humanness. But the problem is not irreversible."

As often happens when I find myself confronting despair, my students have made me optimistic – in this case about the potential for regaining story in our lives. Hopefully, these students' study of Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* has kindled in them a passion for historical fiction as a way of finding a connection with other people from other times and places – and for discovering the real stories, the true experiences, upon which historical fiction must be based.. Through this unit I hope to help students build bridges toward discovering and telling their own stories, and encouraging family and adults with whom their families associate to tell their stories as well. This unit is designed to help students become familiar with how others have done this well, and to encourage them to explore and begin to take ownership of various historical research tools through which they can make these stories richer windows to how things once were, or are today.

## What the students need to know going into the unit

This unit is designed to be taught to students who have completed at least sixth-grade Communications, as taught in Pittsburgh Public Schools, or its equivalent. It will work best with students who are ending a year of study using the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Core Curriculum for Communications in Pittsburgh Public Schools, although it can be adapted for use in other circumstances.

Students should begin it with a familiarity with basic literary and research terms, including those associated with story telling, historical fiction, and history. It will work best with students who recently have read Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, or similar historical fiction. It will be helpful for students to have some experience with computers, including Internet searching. Students should have had exposure to finding information from various media, including online sources and film. Students should have a background in reading and writing in various genres, including responding individually, and via group investigations and discussion, to literature and to informational text.

### **Objectives/Learning goals**

This unit is designed to deepen students' familiarity with, interest in, and ability to make use of various means of learning about and responding to history in the various forms in which we have access to it. A primary goal is to empower students to find, interpret, and react to information about the world in which they live, and which will soon be theirs to survive in and to change. In particular, students will explore and report on the history of particular communities in and around Pittsburgh to which they have ties, with a special focus on the African American community and its history, and other ethnic groups to which members of the class and school community have ties.

In particular, this unit seeks to:

1. Help students explore and develop tools with which to explore the history of their communities and family, using both primary and secondary sources. Students will select a community with which they have ties, and individuals within that community, to research for history and personal story. As part of this goal, students will be given guided experience in exploring personal interview/oral history, informational text, online resources, and film sources which purport to present historical fact.

2. Develop students' research experiences and skills, working with a variety of historical materials; give students tools with which to determine the objectivity, or particular bias and purpose, of informational sources. Students will develop an appreciation for and ability to evaluate the interplay between personal story and "objective" history.

3. Develop students' abilities to present the findings of their research both orally and in writing. A goal of this unit is to hone the students' tools and develop their ability

to write and speak about the results of their studies, guided by district and teacher-made rubrics particular to the assignment.

### **Strategies, classroom activities**

While each teacher who uses this unit will bring her/his own experience and approach to it, this unit offers a general approach, and some particular applications and activities, which flow from successful experiences with 7<sup>th</sup>-grade classes during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years.

(Note: The sample lessons presented below assume a two-period Communications/ELA block, and roughly follow an America's Choice-type lesson structure [being used at this time in Pittsburgh Public Schools Accelerated Learning Academies]. However they can be adapted for use in different class settings.)

#### Getting ready

With this unit, teacher and students embark on a journey which aims to inspire ongoing, hopefully life-long, exploration both of history and of storytelling. The unit is unusual in its attempts to bring together scholarly activity, and personal experience, in ways that positively reinforce one another. This said, preparation is essential to make it work to its fullest, and to avoid potentially hazardous pitfalls.

#### Teacher, prepare thyself

The most important step in preparing to teach this unit is getting to know one's students, and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and personal safety. This unit is designed to be taught close to the end of the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade school year. It will work best – and perhaps only – in a classroom where students feel their dignity and personal stories are secure.

The teacher must know something about each student's background, and limits, if any, to feelings of safety in discussing personal background. Students who are not living with birth-parents or biological relatives will need to be made to feel equal to and safe among others for whom a study of family background is simpler. Each teacher will find her/his own way to do this, but it has to be a conscious process from the start.

The teacher of this unit will learn a great deal about local history along with her/his students. However, the more the teacher knows before beginning the unit, the more helpful the teacher's guidance will be. The attached bibliography is presented as an initial list of resources for the teacher. I suggest becoming familiar with the list, and checking out the resources that look most interesting and useful before and while teaching the unit.

### Materials/resources

This unit is based on interactive experiences that the teacher provides for the students, and that students build on. Ten days of lessons are presented as suggestions for getting the projects going, along with a culminating project to give direction to the exploration suggested here. I include an extensive annotated bibliography and links to online resources.

It will be helpful to have access to portable audio and video recorders for use by students and by the teacher. These are not mandatory for the success of the unit, but can augment student work, especially with interviews, and would be useful tools in preparing the culminating project's success.

In addition, students will explore primary and secondary print and non-print history resources, learning research techniques and experiencing synthesizing information from various sources.

The classroom should have an abundant collection and display of books that are relevant to this exploration. Biography, auto-biography, memoir, historical fiction, and local Pittsburgh history are all important stimuli, as well as resources, for the work the students will be doing.

Students and teachers will develop visual aides as they proceed through the unit. As the teachers displays the charts and diagrams developed via class discussions the classroom will look like the busy, productive center of research, exploration and sharing that it becomes.

### Library/Media resources

This unit becomes more powerful the more the teacher can team with a Library/Media Specialist, preferably in the building, and/or in a nearby public library. The research aspects of this unit depend on access to print and online resources, and on frequent reflection and discussion on the comparative and blended value of various resources. If there is a Library/Media Specialist in the building, I suggest giving her/him a copy of this unit as quickly as possible so that she/he can share ideas and help plan for student success.

### Work with Art and Music teachers

Collaboration with teachers of Art and Music can make this unit stronger. The final project for the unit will be a print piece to which students could contribute relevant pieces of art. Let the Art teacher know what your goals are, and keep her/him posted as you move along, so that she/he can work in lessons and/or special assignments that reflect and build on the unit's work.

Similarly, the Music teacher may be able to use the resources you come up with, and your unit's goals, to build on and reflect this work in Music class. Let the teacher know of such resources as *Shaped by steel: traditional music and stories from Southwestern Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Steel Heritage Corporation, 2005, an amazing collection of music from many ethnic groups) and Cataliotti, Robert H., compiler, producer. *Every tone a testimony: an African American aural history* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 2001) – both available from the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Discuss with the Music teacher how you might be able to use materials like these, and collaborative ideas, to enrich this process for the students.

### Getting started

If students are following the current 7<sup>th</sup>-Grade English/Language Arts Core Curriculum in Pittsburgh Public Schools, they will have just completed reading and learning from Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Undoubtedly they will have had rich discussions on the ways we can learn about history, and, through that experience, about our own lives from reading historical fiction and memoirs through which people share their family stories. The teacher now has to help students begin to transition from being recipients of such writing, to becoming its creators.

Students should be helped to see themselves as story gatherers and tellers, just as Cassie/Mildred Taylor were for the Logan family stories. Revisiting Mildred Taylor's "Author's Note" introduction to *Roll of Thunder*, where she describes her goal in telling this story, could be helpful at this time. As Taylor puts it:

By the fireside in our northern home or in the South where I was born, I learned a history not then written in books but one passed from generation to generation on the steps of moonlit porches and beside dying fires in one-room houses, a history of great-grandparents and of slavery and of the days following slavery; of those who lived still not free, yet who would not let their spirits be enslaved. From my father the storyteller I learned to respect the past, to respect my own heritage and myself.

Let's each of us join her, we tell our students. We all have adults in our families, or in our communities, religious organizations, and school who have stories to tell us that will help us learn, and share with others, "things not written in books" but important to know.

Present to students an overview of the culminating project for the unit: Each student will contribute to multi-media presentation of stories he/she has recorded from family members or other adults in their community, along with a report of research on the history of the time and place of the adult's "memory." These individual projects will be put together into a print and/or live presentation format, based on the resources and needs of the class and the school.

## Day One: Listening to other teens tell their stories

*Goal: students will observe and draw and share conclusions on non-fiction story telling as a means of sharing information.*

I recommend beginning this unit with a class viewing and discussion of Teaching Tolerance's film *A Place at the Table* (free to teachers from [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org); see "Sources" below). In this film students from diverse backgrounds sit around a campfire discussing (with appropriate and well-placed video clips as backdrops) the issues of intolerance their families and they, themselves, have faced. Each presents pride in her/his own background, and respect for the peers that are doing the same. It's a well-done modeling of the kind of atmosphere that will make this unit work well in our classrooms. In addition, students see peers investigating and reporting back on their own families' experiences.

Watching this film should be a guided experience in which the teacher prepares the students to look for and take notes on both each individual's family experiences, but also on common threads and themes that run through the film.

I suggest preceding and following the film with a discussion of the Langston Hughes poem from which the film gets its title, "I, Too":

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then.

Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed--

I, too, am America.

Students can share ideas about what the poem is saying before watching the film, then add to their interpretations following the film. If students are using a Readers/Writers Notebook, have them write down their initial thoughts about the poem, then follow the film with a revisit to those thoughts, and adding new ones based on watching and discussing the film. Include in the response an answer to this question: *How can we learn about history, and our own lives, from stories of other people's experiences?*

The teacher should chart students' comments as they share their thoughts at the end of the class period. Having this chart displayed in the classroom can be helpful as the unit progresses.

### Day Two: Probing our own stories and resources

*Goal: students begin to identify their own stories and sources*

Based on their viewing of the film, students should have some idea of where they can go to get stories about their family's background, about what life was like for their families over the last couple of generations.

The teacher should share Eloise Greenfield's *Childtimes: a three-generation memoir*, letting students know that they are going to produce something similar as they move through this unit. The teacher should show students the book, describing it as the product of three generations whose writing and stories have been brought together for this purpose by the youngest of the three.

Greenfield's introduction is instructive and inspiring:

People are a part of their time. They are affected, during the times that they live, by the things that happen in their world. Big things and small things. A war, an invention such as radio or television, a birthday party, a kiss. All of these experiences help to shape people, and they, in turn, help to shape the present and the future. If we could know more about our ancestors, about the experiences they had when they were children, and after they had grownup, too, we would then know much more about what has shaped us and our world.

Have students brainstorm, write in Sourcebooks, and share with the class ideas about the people from whom to get stories, and what kinds of things they hope to learn about. Tell students they will be exploring possible resources, and practicing getting people to tell their stories. End the lesson with students sharing, and the teacher charting and displaying, the kinds of stories students think they will explore, and possible people from whom to get them.

### Days Three and Four: a visit to the John Heinz History Center

*Goal: students will explore and describe displays of aspects of the history of the various groups of people who came together to make our Pittsburgh.*

Early on in this unit, but not before initial goals are established, students should explore particular collections at the John Heinz History Center ([www.pghhistory.org](http://www.pghhistory.org)). (As this unit is being written, the History Center is offering free field trips for Pittsburgh Public School classes. If there is a cost, it is worthwhile to explore possible funding sources to make this visit happen.)

The History Center has developed exciting, thought-provoking exhibits highlighting the struggles and contributions of the different ethnic groups that have come together to make Pittsburgh. Having a sense of the make-up of your class, and the particular interests of the students, will help the Education Director help you develop the most productive visit. The teacher should contact the education director at the History Center to discuss a field trip and to work together to arrange the most helpful tour (at this writing this is Maggie Satler, [masatler@hswp.org](mailto:masatler@hswp.org); 412-454-6304).

Students should take notes on their visit in their Readers/Writers Notebooks, and write and share summaries of their most striking observations and thoughts upon return. Charting these observations will also help capture them, and will make for an additional helpful classroom display piece. The lesson following the History Center visit should focus on this charting activity, along with an inquiry-based discussion on what kinds of information students found, and what questions this information leads us to. Here the teacher can guide students to recognizing the importance of exploring individual stories where details of actual life experience can put meat on some bones of information. A rich discussion on the interplay between historical research and individual stories, through memoir and oral history, can develop at this point.

### Day Five: a visit to the Library/Media center

*Goal: students will experiment with resources available in the school Library/Media center.*

If possible, arrange to have the school Library/Media teacher spend a period with the students describing, and letting them work with, resources which students can use to gather background information and check facts on the areas they will be exploring. The Library/Media teacher should be told well in advance of the goals of this unit. It would be most helpful to give the Library/Media teacher a copy of the resource list appended to this unit, so that she/he can think through ways to make electronic and print materials most accessible to the students.

During this visit (which could be a regularly-scheduled Library class, if such are held) the students can have a well-led opportunity to explore the resources they can use

as they move forward with their work. They also can look through material which will help them prepare questions for a guest interviewee.

This initial visit should be followed by additional trips to the Library/Media center during which, with the support of the Library/Media teacher, students will research background information and check facts that have come up in the context of their interviews and discussions.

#### Days Six and Seven: preparing for a live interview

*Goal: Students will see themselves as interviewers and prepare to participate in a well-planned, well-organized interview.*

Following the History Center experience and discussion, students should now be ready to plan an interview. At this juncture, a guest interviewee should be on tap for the next lesson. Students should know that they will be assigned to develop questions to ask their guest.

Show students the video *You've got to hear this story: a video on how to do oral history interviews*. Produced by the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University (available from Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, with accompanying teacher's guide) letting them know that they will be like the students they see in the video.

Present students with background information on the guest whom they will interview the following day. Lead students in discussing, charting, the kinds of information they will seek, and the kinds of questions that will best bring that information out.

If the interviewee has been a participant in aspects of Pittsburgh history for which we have film information (see Resources list below) it would be wise to introduce that fact, and show the film to the students, having them take notes on items of particular which they can ask the interviewee about. For example, if the interviewee was involved in the African American community in Pittsburgh prior to or during the demolition of the Hill District for the Civic Arena, the film *Wylie Avenue Days* can provide essential and intriguing information from which students can develop good questions.

Perhaps the teacher can be a guest interviewee at this point, with the students taking turns asking questions, and noting which questions are most effective. Students can work on a list of questions in class and/or for homework, being well prepared for the guest interviewee.

#### Day Eight: the guest interview

*Goal: Students will practice interviewing to bring out stories of individual participation in history.*

I suggest inviting someone with an intriguing history in Pittsburgh during the lifetimes of our students' parents and/or grandparents. Equally important, the guest should have an interest in and compassion for students the age of those who will be interviewing. I have had wonderful experiences with Alma Speed Fox (past president of the Pittsburgh NAACP and long-time activist) as well as Dr. Helen Faison, because both had important stories to tell, and both considered my students to be important. Students responded with enthusiasm to both speakers.

The interviewee should be told in advance of the processes that led to today's session. Rules for discussion should be in place and understood by the students. Students should use their readers/writers notebooks to take notes. The teacher should model the note-taking process by charting as the interviewee speaks and answers questions.

#### Day Nine: analyzing and following up on the interview process

*Goals: students develop questioning and note-taking skills; students write a summary from notes.*

For this lesson the teacher leads, and charts, a discussion on what students learned from the interview process, and what questions were the most (and least) effective in drawing out the information that was most interesting and useful.

Students can be assigned each to write a thank-you letter to the interviewee in which each student describes – with details – something significant he/she learned from the process. (I have found that my guests have responded to these letters in ways that opened up ongoing discussions with individual students. This has been a powerfully inspiring process for some of my students.)

For homework or in class, have each student write a summary of the information they gathered from the interview. The teacher can decide whether this should be done in narrative or informative-essay format, presenting a rubric to students based on the assigned format. (Rubrics from Pittsburgh Public Schools can be found at <http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/14311061314171993/blank/browse.asp?a=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&c=56368>.)

#### Day Ten: looking in detail at the culminating project

*Goal: students will be able to describe, and begin work toward, the unit's culminating project: a multimedia piece which will include both a narrative essay based on interview(s) and an informational essay based on background research; students will develop questions to ask a particular, named interviewee.*

By this time the teacher should have made sure that each student has someone to interview. For those students for whom family members are not viable interviewees, for whatever reason, the teacher should have helped find a staff member or other safe and

accessible adult for the student to interview. If the teacher decides it would be best for some students to work in pairs or small groups, those assignments should be made, along with proposed interviewees. Students should leave this class knowing whom they will interview, and what kinds of information they will seek.

Today, if not before, the teacher should present students with a written statement of the assignment for their final project, as well as the rubrics on which their work will be evaluated. This assignment will vary based on the needs of each class, as well as the resources available to the students.

Students should know that they will be expected to report on their work both in writing, and orally, to their classmates and perhaps, if it is possible to schedule, to gatherings of other students. In schools with lots of resources, it might be possible to put together a video or an audio tape to which each child's interview contributes. Some schools might hold successful fundraising projects to acquire audio and/or AV tools for this purpose.

In every school students can work toward putting together an exciting print piece which includes the stories they come up with through their interviews, along with photographs and other illustrations students and their interviewees can contribute. Each student will write the results of his/her interview(s) in narrative form, and write an informational essay based on the research done around the issues and events raised in their interviews; the informational essay will include a bibliography done to an assigned style guide.

Returning to *Childtimes*, or another similar book, the teacher can show students how each of them can contribute different stories and pictures to an exciting joint project. Let students know of any collaboration you have developed with the Art and/or Music teachers which will add to this project.

Today students should have the opportunity to discuss their concerns about their project, and begin to develop questions they will ask their interviewees. If students are working in pairs or small groups, the groups should meet to discuss their division of labor, their questions, their timetables, and other organizational matters.

#### From this point on

Students are now the information gatherers. The teacher will need regularly to assess how the processes are going, work with students as they come across stumbling blocks, and prepare and lead classroom discussions and exercises to move the processes along.

Using the "Author's Chair" concept from Writers Workshop, students can present their works-in-progress to classmates both for inspiration and for feedback, helping one another through challenges and successes. As the students move through this work, the

teacher will be able to develop realistic timetables to ensure success, as well as student collaboration to make things work well.

Students should periodically check the information their interviewees are giving them against the informational texts and resources available from the Library/Media Center. Ongoing collaboration with the Library/Media teacher is critical here. I suggest considering devoting one lesson to discussing and experimenting with checking information in this way, using an example from an actual interview.

As students go through the process, work with the Library/Media, Art, and Music teachers to help students make the most from their experiences in these classes and with these resources. Students will develop their own ideas about how best to present their work, which can make the unit develop exciting life particular to the involved students.

### Conclusion

Through their work in this unit, each child should develop a sense both of his/her own special place in history and in our world, and of the power of people coming together to tell and listen to one another's stories. Leaving this work, each child should think of himself/herself as a developer of story, and as a story teller whose life will provide accumulating material that deserves to be shared. Each student should feel both more connected to the world from which he/she comes, and more equipped to research and tell the stories of that world. Each child should know the worth of each of the kinds of stories explored during this unit, and of all of the others "out there" that deserved to be told and preserved. Each should feel inspired to continue to develop the research and story-telling skills worked on during this unit.

**Appendix A**  
**Learning Objectives: Standards/Assessment Anchors**  
**Grades 7-8**

**This unit addresses the following PSSA-based Assessment Anchors:**

**R7.A.1.1; R7.A.2.1.2:** Identify and use context clues that help define unfamiliar words.

**R7.A.1.3:** Make and support generalizations and inferences based on literature.

**R7.A.1.4; R7.A.1.5:** Explain/summarize main ideas and relevant details from literature.

**R7.A.2.3.2; R7.A.2.4; R7.A.2.5:** Explain, interpret, and analyze nonfiction.

**R7.B.3.1.1; R7.B.3.2:** Distinguish between facts and opinions and essential and nonessential information within or between texts; Interpret, describe, and/or analyze the use of facts and opinions to make a point or construct an argument in nonfiction text.

**R7.B.3.3:** Interpret and analyze organizational features of nonfiction text, such as graphics and charts.

This unit is designed to meet the Pennsylvania Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Standards as defined for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Core Communications Curriculum, Unit 9.

These are:

- **1.1.8.C:** Use knowledge of root words as well as context clues and glossaries to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas during reading; use these words accurately in speaking and writing.
- **1.1.8.F:** Understand the meaning of and apply key vocabulary across the various subject areas.
- **1.1.8.G:** Demonstrate, after reading, understanding and interpretation of both fiction and nonfiction text, including public documents.
- **1.2.8.A** Read and understand essential content of informational texts and documents in all academic areas.

- **1.2.8.B:** Use and understand a variety of media and evaluate the quality of material produced.
- **1.3.8.F:** Read and responds to nonfiction and fiction.
- **1.4.8.B:** Write multi-paragraph informational pieces (e.g., letters, descriptions, reports, instructions, essays, articles, interviews).
- **1.4.8.C:** Write persuasive pieces.
- **1.5.8.A:** Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
- **1.5.8.B:** Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.
- **1.5.8.C:** Write with controlled and/or subtle organization.
- **1.5.8.F:** Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- **1.5.8.G:** Present and/or defend written work for publication when appropriate.
- **1.6.8.C:** Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations.
- **1.6.8.F:** Use media for learning purposes.
- **1.8.8.A:** Select and refine a topic for research.
- **1.8.8.B:** Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.
- **1.8.8.C:** Organize, summarize and present the main ideas from research.

## **Appendix B**

### **Core Curriculum Unit Nine Questions, Key Concepts**

#### Unit 9: What can we learn from people who have overcome challenges?

During this unit, students will apply formal research and note-taking strategies to writing an historical biographical account of someone they know. Key strategies include the interpretation and use of literary elements, identifying main ideas and supporting details, questioning and summarizing nonfiction texts, and taking notes from interviews, conversations, and discussions. Students will present their final projects to classmates by delivering oral presentations. Students will review the year's grammar topics and apply appropriate conventions to writing, revising, and editing their narratives. Students will expand their vocabulary by learning words specifically associated with their narrative subjects and the time period in which they lived, and by using those words effectively in their final projects.

#### Key Concepts:

- Posing thoughtful, focused questions and using reliable sources will make research productive.
- The ideas we present in a research report should be supported by evidence.
- Research presentations allow us to formally explain and defend our conclusions.

#### Overarching Questions:

- How does writing a biography/autobiography differ from other types of writing?
- What type of research should authors of historical nonfiction do?
- What strategies do researchers use to collect and present their information?
- How does one determine if a source is “reliable?”

## Bibliography/Resource list

### Books: Pittsburgh African American experience, nonfiction

Benson, Hattie. *Humble and mindful until death*. Bloomington, IN: 1<sup>st</sup> Books Library, 2000. First-person account of life in a large, poor, African American family beginning in rural Alabama, moving to Pittsburgh. A combination of reminiscence and longing for “good old days” of respect among people for one another and for religion. Reads like unedited oral history, with the strengths and weaknesses that accompany. Book made possible partly via work of PPS’s Merrie Love working with Hill House.

Benson, Joyce. *Last tag*. Nashville, TN: Winston-Derek Publishers, 1991. Based upon a diary kept by the author during the years 1952 to 1960, growing up in and facing racism and violence in Pittsburgh African American community.

Black, Samuel W., editor. *Soul soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam era*. Pittsburgh: Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center, 2006. Powerful book includes personal stories, photos, poetry, essays, and chapter by Black entitled “‘As I Recall,’ from the Hill and Homewood to the War in Vietnam” based on interviews and oral history of Pittsburgh-area Vietnam War vets.

Bodnar, John, Simon, Roger, and Weber, Michael P. *Lives of their own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983.

Darden, Joe T. *Afro-Americans in Pittsburgh: the residential segregation of a people*. Lexington, MA, Lexington Books, 1973. Charts, graphs, maps demonstrate segregation trends in Pittsburgh up to 1970s.

Dickerson, Dennis C. *Out of the crucible: Black steelworkers in Western Pennsylvania, 1875-1980*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986.

Edmunds, Arthur J. *Daybreakers: the story of the Urban League of Pittsburgh, the first eighty years*. (Updated by Esther Bush.) Pittsburgh: Urban League of Pittsburgh, 1999.

Elam, Harry Justin. *The past as present in the drama of August Wilson*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Foner, Philip. *Organized labor and the black worker, 1619-1973*. New York: Praeger, 1974. Chapters on steel, coal especially.

Fullilove, Mindy Thompson. *Root Shock : how tearing up city neighborhoods hurts America and what we can do about it*. New York: Ballantine/One World, 2004. Powerful account of impact of “urban renewal” destruction of African-American neighborhoods, including Pittsburgh’s Hill District.

Glasco, Laurence A., editor. *The WPA history of the Negro in Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004, For background information and insight, to set the stage.

Hinshaw, John H. *Steel and steelworkers: race and class struggle in twentieth-century Pittsburgh*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002. Well documented, thought-provoking account of history of Black steelworkers' relationship to the industry and their union.

Hays, Samuel P., editor. *City at the Point: essays on the social history of Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989. All of the essays are interesting and provide useful, thought-provoking background. Of particular interest: Laurence Glasco's "Double Burden: the Black Experience in Pittsburgh (pages 69-109).

Lewis, Ronald L. *Black coal miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict 1780-1980*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press. 1987. Of particular relevance: Part III: Exclusion: The North; and Part V: Elimination: An Epiologue: Demise of the Black Miner. Includes charts, extensive list of primary sources.

Mason, Major Albert and Bangs, Ralph L., editors. *The state of Black youth in Pittsburgh: perspectives on young African-Americans in the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County*. Pittsburgh, PA : Urban League of Pittsburgh, 1999.

McBride, David, ed. *Blacks in Pennsylvania history: research and educational perspectives*. Harrisburg: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1983. Proceedings of the Black History in Pennsylvania Conference held Apr. 5-6, 1979, Pittsburgh, PA.

Moore, Marat. *Women in the mines: stories of life and work*. New York: Twayne Publishers; London: Prentice Hall International, 1996. Of particular interest: story of Carol Davis, African American miner from Marianna (Washington County), PA.

Pittsburgh Board of Public Education. *The quest for racial equality in the Pittsburgh public schools: the annual report 1965*. Pittsburgh, PA: Board of Education. 1965.

Thomas, Anika D. *Life in the Ghetto*. Kansas City, MO: Landmark Editions, 1991. A thirteen-year-old girl writes of her life.

Trotter, Joe William, Jr. *The Great migration in historical perspective: new dimensions of race, class, and gender*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Trotter, Joe William, Jr. and Smith, Eric Ledell, editors. *African Americans in Pennsylvania : shifting historical perspectives*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press; Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1997. Collection of 19 essays grouped into four parts, the titles of which show the editors' foci: Part I: The commercial economy: the transformation of Africans into

African Americans, 1684-1840; Part II: The industrializing era: the meaning of freedom in a democratic state, 1840-1870; Part III: The industrial era: new patterns of class, race, and ethnicity, 1870-1945; and Part IV: the transformation of the Black community: toward the postindustrial era, 1945-1985. Trotter's 39-page introduction is an invaluable introduction to and comment on the historiography in this arena. Essays of particular interest for this unit include Dennis C. Dickerson's "Black Church in Industrializing Western Pennsylvania, 1870-1950" and Laurence Glasco's "Double Burden: The Black Experience in Pittsburgh," discussing the 20<sup>th</sup> century experience up to 1985.

TuSmith, Bonnie and Byerman, Keith E., editors. *Critical essays on John Edgar Wideman*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006.

Williams, Melvin D. *On the street where I lived*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981.

Wilson, Mary. *Colorless soul*. Bloomington, IN: 1stBooks Library, 2001 Memoir about an African American family with some white ancestry, growing up facing racism in Pittsburgh.

Doctoral theses, speeches, reports, other scholarly pieces: African-Americans in Pittsburgh area:

B.G. "When opportunity knocks." *American Libraries*; Nov95, Vol. 26 Issue 10, p997, 1/3p, 1bw. From abstract: With the September publication of *People in Search of Opportunity: The African-American Experience in Mercer County, Pennsylvania*, Roland C. Barksdale-Hall has realized a longstanding dream: to give something back to the community of his youth. From Abstract: "Head librarian of Pennsylvania State University's Shenango campus, Barksdale-Hall has been attracted to the research process as far back as his student days at Sharon High School, but keenly felt the absence of resources that could answer his questions about local African-American history. To fill in the blanks for today's schoolchildren, he conducted nine years of painstaking research that included gathering oral histories, and is currently working on a teacher's manual to accompany the 55-page book published by the PSU press. 'I look at this project almost as a microcosm of what I'd like to see done on a national level,' Barksdale-Hall told *American Libraries* of his work, which chronicles local black history from 1759-1994 and documents such milestones as the Underground Railroad and the Great Migration. Toward that goal, he is planning a traveling exhibit of the African-American experience in Mercer County to showcase the 'strains and themes that run through all black communities'; proceeds from the \$7.95 title are funding that initiative."

*Beyond adversity : African-Americans' struggle for equality in western Pennsylvania, 1750-1990*. Pittsburgh, PA: Museum Programs Division, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1993. 36-pages, 8-1/2 x 11; excellent introduction to/summary of the African American experience in the Pittsburgh area. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch)

Brown, Eliza Smith. *African-American legacy in Allegheny County: a timeline of key events*. Pittsburgh, Pa. Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, 1995.  
(Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch)

Bush, Esther. *The state of Black Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh: Urban League of Pittsburgh. 2001. Speech to the Urban League of Pittsburgh, Inc. Annual Meeting and Conference, Monday, October 29, 2001, Carnegie Mellon University Center. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch)

Glasco, Laurence. "The Civil Rights Movement in Pittsburgh: To Make This City Some Place Special," *Freedom Corner*, [www.freedomcorner.org/downloads/glasco.pdf](http://www.freedomcorner.org/downloads/glasco.pdf) (December 4, 2004)

Ingham, John N. and Feldman, Lynne B. "African-American Business Leaders." Article on Greenlee and Posey. From website *African-American Experience*.  
<http://aae.greenwood.com/doc.aspx?i=16> (accessed 3/10/08)

Proctor, Ralph, Jr. *Racial discrimination against Black teachers and Black professionals in the Pittsburgh public school system, 1834-1973* Thesis (Ph. D.)--University of Pittsburgh, 1979. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch)

Schmidt, John and Zipperer, Ben. "Decline of Representation of African Americans in Unions and Manufacturing, 1979-2007." Washington, DC: Center for Economic Policy and Research. Includes 17 pages of tables charting annual changes in race/ethnicity/gender composition of industry, unions in US. United Steel Workers notes in their March 13-14, 2008 online bulletin (<http://www.uswa.org/uswa/program/content/4527.php>): "The study incorporated data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and also found that manufacturing workers of any race are now no more likely to be union members than workers in any other sector of the economy. According to Schmitt and Zipperer, unionization rates among African Americans dropped from 31.7 to 15.7 percent between 1983 and 2007. Unionization rates also dropped among whites and Hispanics during that period, but not as dramatically as those for African Americans."  
[http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/unions\\_aa\\_2008\\_02.pdf](http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/unions_aa_2008_02.pdf) (accessed March 1, 2008)

Sizemore, Barbara, Brossard, Carlos A., and Harrigan, Birney. *An abashing anomaly : the high achieving predominantly Black elementary school*. Pittsburgh, PA: Dept. of Black Community Education, Research and Development, University of Pittsburgh, 1983. Microfiche. (Government Documents, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.)

Urban League of Pittsburgh. *The State of Black Pittsburgh*. Annual reports. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.)

Wintermantel, Ed. *From slaves to statesmen: a history of Blacks in Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh, PA: Press Pub. Co., 1982. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.)

Williams, Melvin. D. *The human dilemma : a decade later in Belmar*. Fort Worth, TX.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.)

Yoso, Tara J. "Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth." *Race, Ethnicity & Education*; March 2005, Vol. 8 Issue 1, p69-91, 23p. Author's Abstract: "This article conceptualizes community cultural wealth as a critical race theory (CRT) challenge to traditional interpretations of cultural capital. CRT shifts the research lens away from a deficit view of Communities of Color as places full of cultural poverty disadvantages, and instead focuses on and learns from the array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and unacknowledged. Various forms of capital nurtured through cultural wealth include aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital. These forms of capital draw on the knowledges Students of Color bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom. This CRT approach to education involves a commitment to develop schools that acknowledge the multiple strengths of Communities of Color in order to serve a larger purpose of struggle toward social and racial justice."

Books: Pittsburgh African American experience, fiction

Attaway, William. *Blood on the forge*. New York: Monthly Review Press. 1987. Story of experience of three African American brothers from Kentucky in Pittsburgh-area steel mills during 1920s; powerful, informative prelude to our period of study gives important perspective.

Wideman, John Edgar. *Homewood books*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. 1992.

Wideman, John Edgar. *All stories are true*. New York: Pantheon, 1992. Powerful short stories, largely set in Pittsburgh (Homewood and vicinity).

Wideman, John Edgar. *Two cities*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. Novel; the "two cities" are Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Wilson, August. Pittsburgh cycle plays: *Gem of the Ocen, Joe Turner's Coe and Gone, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, The Piano Lesson, Seven Guitars, Fences, Two Trains Running, Jitney, King Hedley II, and Radio Golf*. (For a useful chart listing these plays, when produced in New York which decade covered, honors, and short synopsis see: "Recap of the Pittsburgh Cycle of Plays by August Wilson" at [www.africanaculture.org/aacc\\_pdfs/AugustWilsonPlaysChart.pdf](http://www.africanaculture.org/aacc_pdfs/AugustWilsonPlaysChart.pdf))

Books/collections: Pittsburgh ethnic experience, other than African American, nonfiction

Bodnar, John E., editor. *Ethnic experience in Pennsylvania*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1973. Although most essays focus on eastern and coal mining parts of Pennsylvania, of interest for this unit are George J. Prpic's "Croatian Immigrants in Pittsburgh," and Carl Oblinger's "Alms for Oblivion: the Making of a Black Underclass in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1780-1860."

*Celebrating nine decades at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral*. Pittsburgh, Pa: St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 1997. (Reference stack area, main branch, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; noncirculating.)

Ciotola, Nicholas P. *Italians of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2005. From the "Images of America" series, mostly photographic history of one of Pittsburgh's largest immigrant/ethnic groups.

Hornberger, Fred, ed. *Pittsburgh's Germans yesterday and today*. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh German Tricentennial Committee, 1983. (noncirculating; Mt. Lebanon and Oakmont Carnegie Libraries)

Hungarian Ethnic Heritage Society Group. *Educational curriculum kit(s)*. Pittsburgh: Hungarian Ethnic Heritage Study Group, Pittsburgh (with the support of the American-Hungarian Educators Association of Washington, D.C.), 1981. 10 volumes in one. Includes "Hungarian immigrants in Greater Pittsburgh, 1880-1980," "Hungarian community life in Greater Pittsburgh," bibliography, teaching guide. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library, Main Branch)

Krause, Corinne Azen. *Grandmothers, mothers, and daughters: oral histories of three generations of ethnic American women*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991. Italian, Jewish and Slavic experiences from the "old countr(ies)" through migration and in the Pittsburgh area. Based on oral histories which the editor dubs possibly "the twentieth century substitute for memoir." He notes, "Memory depends largely on perception. Where we stand affects what we see, what sense we make of it, and what we later recall. Most readers of oral history recognize that the race, class, gender, and ethnicity of interviewees (and to some degree of those who interview them) will necessarily shape their personal narratives. In [this book] Krause demonstrates that even within the same family different generations offer dissimilar versions of a shared history."

Kulina, Anita. *Millhunks and renegades: a portrait of a Pittsburgh neighborhood*. Pittsburgh: Brandt Street Press, 2003. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library, Main Branch)

Miller, Donald L. and Sharpless, Richard E. *The kingdom of coal; work, enterprise, and ethnic communities in the mine fields*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985. Though focused on eastern Pennsylvania's anthracite mining communities, this

study has useful information about ethnic groups that settled also in the Pittsburgh area. Of particular interest is the description of the peoples collectively referred to as “Slavs,” which, according to the author, were “people from the plains and mountains and marshes of eastern Europe and the Balkans. They were Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbians, Croatians, and people of more than a dozen other nationalities, mostly from the empires of Czarist Russia and Austria-Hungary.”

O’Donnell, Annie. *Your fondest Annie: letters from Annie O’Donnell to James P. Phelan, 1901-1904*. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005. Annie O’Donnell left Ireland for a life as a domestic servant in Pittsburgh, working for the Mellon family. Her letters tell of her life as an Irish immigrant to Pittsburgh. Perhaps most useful for researchers is the well-documented, highly detailed 31-page “Introduction” by Maureen Murphy, rich with information about Irish immigration to and life in Pittsburgh. Murphy provides street addresses for O’Donnell’s jobs and living places which could add well to history-oriented tours of Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

Ouin, Ray. *In loving memory – and still more Lawrenceville stories*. Pittsburgh: Lawrenceville Historical Society, 2005. Lots of ethnic references in this collection, including one story about Pittsburgh anti-Catholic prejudice (“None but Catholics need apply . . .”).

Richardson, Troy. *Native Americans in contemporary Pennsylvania*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Heritage Affairs Commission, 1995. 32-page pamphlet has useful statistics comparing tribal population figures from 1980 and 1990, along with census information by county for 1990; also includes short essays on community concerns and issues, government programs, and more.

Sapienza, Elisa Palombo. *Beyond the gold door*. Pittsburgh: A.S. Donnelly, 2002. Chronicle of two Italian-American families in Pittsburgh, and through their stories a look at the Italian-American community, and the other ethnic groups in Pittsburgh. Author’s comment: these families came to the United States to pursue “the ‘American dream.’ They brought proud and turbulent histories and the tenacity to succeed. Like many immigrants, they walked into Anglo-American ‘arrogant superiority’ and challenged its obstacles. They came to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a mosaic of cultures and classes living harmoniously side by side in Homewood. And, like earlier elite upper-class Homewood suburbanites, they helped establish their own ethnic version of the American dream. Their experiences parallel those reported by historians who recorded the social history of Italians and other newcomers who lived ‘in the shadow of the mills.’ This anecdotal social history is a tribute to all immigrants, each group with its own unique stories, who have collectively contributed to the rich history that has made America the great country that she is.” Story goes through 1990s.

Selavan, Ida Cohen, ed. for National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section. *My voice was heard*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1981. A product of an oral history project of the Pittsburgh Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, a

“cornucopia of personal reminiscences and experiences of a wide spectrum of the community’s older members.”

Shaughnessy, Michael R. *German Pittsburgh*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishers, 2007. Photographic review of Pittsburgh’s largest and one of its oldest ethnic immigrant groups.

Sipe, C. Hale. *Indian chiefs of Pennsylvania: a study of the part played by the American Indian in the history of Pennsylvania, based primarily on the Pennsylvania Archives and colonial record, and built around the outstanding chiefs*. Lewisburg, PA: Wennawoods Publishing, 1997. While quite old (originally published in 1927 in Butler, PA) and reflecting prejudices and language of that period, this 569-page volume is the most thorough study I’ve found of Pennsylvania’s original inhabitants, including quite a bit about the Pittsburgh area, through the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Wilson, Robert Edward and Zabrosky, Frank A. *Resources on the ethnic and the immigrant in the Pittsburgh area*. Pittsburgh: (s.n.), 1979. Prepared under a grant from the Hillman Foundation to the Ethnic Studies Committee, Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library, Main Branch)

Wudarczyk, James, et al., *A Doughboy’s Tale . . . and more Lawrenceville stories*. Pittsburgh: Lawrenceville Historical Society, 2004. Stories include one on routing out Communists in the steelworkers union and ethnic societies during McCarthy witchhunt era.

Wudarczyk, James. *East European ethnicity and its effect on the Lawrenceville community of Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh: J. WSudarczyk, 1999 (?).(Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library, Main Branch)

#### Books: Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh-area ethnic group experiences other than African American, fiction

Bathanti, Joseph. *East Liberty*. Simpsonville, S.C.: Banks Channel Books, 2001. A coming-of-age novel about a fatherless boy in Pittsburgh's rough Italian-American neighborhood in the 1950s and '60s.

Bell, Thomas. *Out of this furnace*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991. Includes afterword by David P. Demarest, Jr. Now-classic novel of early Braddock steelworkers from Eastern European backgrounds. Has been required reading in some Pittsburgh Public Schools high school courses.

Goran, Lester. *Tales from the Irish Club: a Collection of Short Stories*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1996. Short stories from Irish Pittsburgh. (Goran’s other Irish Pittsburgh story collections are *She loved me once, and other stories*, 1997, and *Outlaws*

of the Purple Cow, 1999, also Kent Statue University Press). Poignant, well-crafted, adult stories give rich flavor of life for “ordinary” Irish Pittsburghers. Lots of references to local streets and institutions make this especially “homey” for Pittsburghers.

Karas, Nick. *Hunky: the immigrant experience*. Bloomington, IN: 1<sup>st</sup> Books Library, 2004. Stories of two families from the Carpathian Mountains of east-central Europe who emigrate to the Pittsburgh region’s coal mines, steel mills and the farmlands of upstate New York.

### Related books for students

Cameron, Sara. *Out of war: true stories from the front lines of the Children’s Movement for Peace in Colombia*. New York: Scholastic, 2001. Nine young people tell stories of life, displacement, identity, survival in war-torn Colombia; in conjunction with UNICEF. Examples of first-person story from contemporaries of our students.

Fenton, Edward. *Duffy’s Rocks*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999. Children’s historical fiction story of an Irish-American family in Pittsburgh during the 1930s Great Depression.

Greenfield, Eloise and Little, Lessie Jones. *Childtimes: a three-generation memoir*. New York, NY: HarperTrophy, 1993. Childhood memoirs of three black women--grandmother, mother, and daughter-who grew up between the 1880's and the 1950's.

Houston, Julia. *New boy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. Novel about 15-year-old African American boy who leaves 1950s segregated Virginia for an all-white Connecticut boarding school, then wants to return to the south to join the new Civil Rights movement. Issues of displacement, identity, and history.

Jacob, Iris. *My sisters’ voices: teenage girls of color speak out*. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. First-person stories “by teenage girls of African-American, Hispanic, Asian American, Native American, and biracial backgrounds.” Relevant for topics discussed, examples of first-person story from contemporaries of our students.

Pryor, Bonnie. *Thomas in danger*. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1999. Historical fiction about a boy captured and nurtured by Mohawks in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Pennsylvania. Author portrays a young “white” boy finding surprising-to-him humanness and friendship among Mohawks, whose plight he learns sympathy for even as he continues to love his family and the world from which he came.

Summers, Barbara, ed. *Open the unusual door: true life stories of challenge, adventure, and success by Black Americans*. Boston: Graphia, 2005. Selections from 16 autobiographies of well-known people from Queen Latifah to Colin Powell.

Books: background re impact of race, racism in schools

Delpit, Lisa. *Other people's children: cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton, 1995.

Delpit, Lisa, and Dowdy, Joanne Kilgour, editors. *The skin that we speak: thoughts on language and culture in the classroom*. New York: New Press, 2002.

Thompson, Gail L. *Through ebony eyes: what teachers need to know but are afraid to ask about African American students*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/John Wiley & Sons, 2004.

Tatum, Beverly Daniel. *"Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" and other conversations about race*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.

Books (print and sound): African American oral history(ies)

Cataliotti, Robert H., compiler, producer. *Every tone a testimony: an African American aural history*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 2001. (book on CD)  
An outstanding resource. From the Introduction: this collection "draws upon the Folkways Records' archive to create a history of African American life and culture in sound – an aural history. Drawn from both the African American oral and literary traditions, this aural history illustrates the evolution of Black expressive forms from their African roots and their re-memberings and adaptations in America, often through the interaction and melding with European and Native American conceptions and forms, to a distinct tradition that has been recognized around the world for its power, creativity, and resilience." Two discs. Selections begin with Langston Hughes and an excerpt from "Negro Folk Music of Alabama" and go through poetry and rap of the 1990s. Useful notes on each selection; bibliography.

Hogan, Wesley C. *Many minds, one heart: SNCC's dream for a new America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Compelling, well-documented look at people who were involved in the civil rights movement, including northerners, and the impact of this experience on them.

Honey, Michael K. *Black workers remember: an oral history of segregation, unionism, and the freedom struggle*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

Rogers, Kim Lacy. *Life and death in the Delta: African American narratives of violence, resilience, and social change*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. (electronic book, available via Carnegie Library link) Useful resource both for its thoughtful, useful discussion of the benefits and limitations of oral history, and for its look at contemporary life in the area students will have just read about in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.

Sidel, Ruth. *Urban survival: the world of working-class women*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1978. Stories of working class women's lives based on oral history interviews. While all are interesting and are a cross-section of experiences (including Italian, Hispanic) of particular interest for this unit are those of two New York City African American women, Gwen Johnson and Eleanor Thomas. Especially important reading for teachers for whom these life experiences are much different from their own.

Terry, Wallace. *Bloods: an oral history of the Vietnam War by Black veterans*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1992.

Terry, Wallace. *Missing pages: black journalists of modern America: an oral history*. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers: Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2007

### Books on conducting oral history

Kelm, Daniel. *To Feel as Our Ancestors Did: Collecting and Performing Oral History*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2005.

Ritchie, Donald A. *Doing oral history: a practical guide*. New York: Oxford University Press US. 2003. Chapter 7 ("Teaching Oral History") available on-line at [http://books.google.com/books?id=6l-mV7M5G1QC&pg=PA188&dq=teaching+oral+history&source=gbp\\_toc\\_r&cad=0\\_0&sig=ID-\\_Wx8ozGmPMz89smI06MJmpO4](http://books.google.com/books?id=6l-mV7M5G1QC&pg=PA188&dq=teaching+oral+history&source=gbp_toc_r&cad=0_0&sig=ID-_Wx8ozGmPMz89smI06MJmpO4).

### Illustrations, photographs

Brewer, John M. *African Americans in Pittsburgh*. Charleston, SC : Arcadia Pub., 2006. Primarily photographs from *Pittsburgh Courier* and Carnegie Museum of Art.

Sims, Kenneth M. *The voice*. Pittsburgh, PA: K.M. Sims, 1980. (Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Main Branch.)

### Books of related interest

Blackwell, Unita (with JoAnne Prichard Morris). *Barefooting': Life lessons on the road to freedom*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2006. Reminiscences of the author's journey "from field-hand to full-time freedom fighter" in Jim Crow Mississippi. Useful work as teacher prepares to make the transition from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* to nonfiction, as another look at the Mississippi of the time of Taylor's book, and beyond, through the Civil Rights movement to the present.

Danticat, Edwidge. *Brother, I'm dying*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 2007. Memoir of a child growing up first in Haiti, then as an immigrant to the US. Current issues addressed include problems with immigration, and terror and death at the hands of the Department

of Homeland Security. Useful also as memoir-writing at its best. Julia Alvarez comments, “. . . we become brothers and sisters in an even larger family, the human family, bonded together by the power of her storytelling. This is what the best writing can do. And why we need more storytellers like her more than ever.”

Rutland, Eva. *When we were colored: a mother's story*. Sacramento, CA: IWP Book Publishers; 2007. First published in 1964, stories of life in California in the 1950s told by a young woman who had grown up in the segregated south during the years of the Great Depression and Jim Crow. From a review by Howard Weaver: “Eva Rutland tells the kinds of stories that form the foundation of civilization – emotionally rich, immensely satisfying tales of family, friendship, and basic humanity. Her narrative gift lets us share a perspective we’d never know on our own – yet also discover how universal her experience has been . . . . This is profound storytelling wearing a deceptively simple wrap: clean, transparent prose that introduces readers to a world they will very much enjoy.”

#### DVDs, videos

*African American lives* [videorecording] / with Henry Gates, Jr. ; a film by Kunhardt Productions ; executive producers, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., William R. Grant, Peter W. Kunhardt ; written by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. ; series producers, Graham Judd, Leslie D. Farrell ; a production of Kunhardt Productions, Inc. and Thirteen/ WNET New York. Alexandria, Va: PBS Home Video ; Hollywood, CA Distributed by Paramount Home Entertainment, 2006; 3 hours 40 minutes; color with b&w footage. [Note from Carnegie Library: A compelling combination of storytelling and science, this series uses genealogy, oral histories, family stories and DNA to trace roots of Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and several accomplished African Americans down through American history and back to Africa.] Gates helps celebrities trace their roots; includes Oprah Winfrey, Whoopie Goldberg, Quincy Jones, Mae Jemison, Chris Tucker. Powerful introducer to this unit's core concepts, and to possibilities for everyone – including African Americans – researching/finding roots.

*August Wilson* [videorecording] / LWT ; produced by Melvyn Bragg and Tony Knox ; directed by Tony Knox. Princeton, NJ: Films for the Humanities and Sciences DVD Collection, 2004. An excellent film in which Wilson comments intertwine with clips from the historic Hill District and comments from critics, fellow writers, and other local people. An excellent resource when exploring Pittsburgh African American, Hill District, or general history.

*Frank Bolden: the man behind the words*. [videorecording] Pittsburgh, PA: Daniel Love, 2001. (28 minutes. Color with b&w footage.)

*From Paesi to Pittsburgh: an exhibition of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania*. Pittsburgh: Argentine Productions for the Historical Society of Western

Pennsylvania, 1998. Shown as part of the exhibit at the Heinz History Center, this 9-minute film is a good introduction to Pittsburgh's Italian heritage.

*Holy Pittsburgh!* [videorecording]. Pittsburgh: WQED, 1989; producer/writer/narrator, Rick Sebak. "A tour of some of Pittsburgh's many memorable and unusual houses of worship, highlighting Pittsburgh's ethnic heritages, architecture and religious traditions."

*The History Makers talking truth.* Volumes 1, 2 and 3 [videorecordings] / Simmons Lathan Media Group presents in association with the HistoryMakers ; executive producers, Russell Simmons ... [et al.] ; supervising producer, Paul Garnes ; director, Prentice Sinclair Smith ; writer/producer, director, Nancy Green Oey. Chatsworth, CA: Image Entertainment, 2005. [On screen note: "The following interviews were selected from hundreds conducted by The HistoryMakers, a national non-profit oral history archive in Chicago, Illinois whose mission is to preserve African American history."]

*A Jewish legacy* [videorecording]. Pittsburgh: WQED video, 1999. PJ History Associates; a production of Payette Productions, Inc.; executive producer & writer, Gary Hines ; producer, Julie Mirocha project director & historian, Barbara Burstin. (57 minutes; color with black and white) A fun (perhaps overlong for most uses) look at Pittsburgh's Jewish past.

*John Wideman* [videorecording] : a conversation with John Wideman / an SSR-RTSI Swiss Television production ; producer and director, Matteo Bellinelli ; producer, Larry Adelman ; writer, Barbara Christian. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 1992.(26 minutes; color with b&w footage.)

*K. Leroy Irvis: the lion of Pennsylvania* [videorecording]

Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, 2004. ] [presented by University of Pittsburgh, Office of Public Affairs] ; based on an original idea by The KLI Productions, Inc.; executive producer, Robert Hill; producer, Bill Young; Story treatment by Robert Hill; director/writer, Bill Medica. (41 minutes; color with b&w footage)

*Out of this furnace: a walking tour of Thomas Bell's novel.* [videorecording] Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990 (distributor). Written and developed by David Demarest, produced by Steffi Domike. (19 minutes, color with b&w footage) Author takes viewers on a tour of then-current Braddock with contrasting footage from old clips; prominence of the steel mill is evident in both, along with references to ethnic backgrounds of older and then-current steel workers.

*A place at the table: struggles for equality in America.* Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center, 2000.VHS; 40 minutes; teachers guide and 144-page classroom text that includes narratives, historical documents, first-person stories and commentary; and 13 planned lessons. Available free to teachers from Teaching Tolerance a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (<http://www.tolerance.org/index.jsp>).

*Struggles in steel: a story of African-American steelworkers.* 86 min., 1996 Tony Buba, producer. Based on experiences in Braddock, PA. Distributed by California Newsreel.

*Women of steel.* Pittsburgh: Mon Valley Media: Distributed by the University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984. 28 minutes.

*Wylie Avenue days* [videorecording] produced by WQED/Pittsburgh; producers, Doug Bolin, Christopher Moore. Pittsburgh, PA: QED Communications, 1991. 60 minutes. Color with b&w footage. A documentary recapturing the heyday of Pittsburgh's Hill District from the 1930's through the 1950's, focusing on the neighborhood's social and economic life, using archival stills and footage and interviews with past and present residents. An indispensable part of this unit; helps to establish rich cultural heritage of Pittsburgh's African American community, as well as what happened to the Hill district and its residents and businesses with the "urban renewal" that created the Civil Arena.

#### Oral histories on video: Pittsburghers other than African American

*Walter Szczypinski, steel worker* [videorecording]. Pittsburgh, 1996. Born 1919 in the Strip, Szczypinski talks about growing up in Lawrenceville and his experiences in steel plants and as a participant in the "Little Steel" strikes of 1946 and the 1950s. Includes song "Pittsburgh Ain't a Smoky City Anymore."

#### DVDs/VHS resources re oral history

*You've got to hear this story: a video on how to do oral history interviews.* Produced by the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1998. 30 minutes. Accompanying teaching manual: Dean, Paul (with Toby Daspit and Petra Munro), *Talking gumbo: a teacher's guide to using oral history in the classroom*; 91 pages; includes lesson plans, bibliography. Video aimed at middle and high school teachers and students. Useful examples of do's and don'ts in interview situations.

Long, Jennifer N. *History from the living: the organization and craft of oral history.* Newport: Grin Productions, 1998. 17 minutes. Instructional video aimed at middle school and high school teachers and studies.

#### Websites: African Americans in Pittsburgh

Freedom Corner: <http://www.freedomcorner.org/> Sponsored by Urban League of Pittsburgh. In addition to information about the monument and history of the Corner, includes links to a Civil Rights timeline, information about 100 local leaders, a 36-page teachers guide, and more. Accessed 3/9/08.

Historic Pittsburgh. <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/pittsburgh/> "Historic Pittsburgh is a comprehensive collection of local resources that supports personal and scholarly research of the western Pennsylvania area. This Web site enables access to historic material held by the

University of Pittsburgh's University Library System, the Library & Archives at the Heinz History Center, Carnegie Museum of Art, Chatham College Archives, and Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation.” Includes links for teachers, all users to census reports, photographs, an interactive time-line, and more.

#### Websites: African American history general

*The African American Experience*. Greenwood Publishers. Self-described: “The widest-ranging and easiest-to-use online collection on African American life ever assembled, *The African American Experience* is the definitive electronic research tool for African American history and culture from one of the most respected publishers in the field. The two primary goals: to provide rock-solid information from authorities in the field, and to allow African Americans to speak for themselves through a wealth of primary sources. Drawing on over 400 volumes, and designed under the guidance of leading librarians, this database gives voice to the black experience from its African origins to the present day.” (A site search using search term “Pittsburgh” yielded more than 1,000 hits; many were from the Pittsburgh *Courier*.) [www.aae.greenwood.com/default.aspx](http://www.aae.greenwood.com/default.aspx)

#### Websites: Pittsburgh ethnic history

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: General Resources on Ethnic Groups. Links to many resources, online and other, on Pittsburgh ethnic history and life today. Excellent starting place for students researching area's diverse ethnic groups and history.  
<http://www.clpgh.org/research/socialstudies/ethnic/general.html> (Accessed 3/19/08)

#### Websites: Pittsburgh Hill District and related information

<http://www.pittsburgh.net/ethnic.cfm>  
Carnegie links

<http://www.angelfire.com/pa4/blacknet/local.html>  
Pittsburgh Black Net

[http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2002/08/08/multimedia/20020809\\_hill\\_slideshow\\_1.html](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2002/08/08/multimedia/20020809_hill_slideshow_1.html)  
New York Times slide show on Hill District

<http://forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=150439>  
Photos of Hill District

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njm1/hillhist.htm>  
History of Hill District

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hill\\_District](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hill_District)  
Wikipedia article on the Hill

[http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/district6/html/hill\\_district.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/district6/html/hill_district.html)  
Pittsburgh City Council website includes links to maps

<http://www.clpgh.org/exhibit/neighborhoods/hill/>  
Carnegie Library website

Electronic resources/websites: teaching oral history/using oral history in the classroom

*Fishbowls and bloopers: oral history in the classroom.* Alberta Online Encyclopedia sponsored by Heritage Community Foundation.

[http://www.youthsource.ab.ca/teacher\\_resources/oral\\_fish.html#top](http://www.youthsource.ab.ca/teacher_resources/oral_fish.html#top) Guide with links to using oral history in the classroom. (Accessed 3/10/08)

Oral History Association resources for K-12 teachers:

[http://alpha.dickinson.edu/oha/org\\_com\\_ed\\_test.html](http://alpha.dickinson.edu/oha/org_com_ed_test.html) Includes excellent links to “Pre-Collegiate Oral History Projects” (Accessed 4/10/08)

Walbert, Kathryn. Incorporating oral history into the K–12 curriculum. From LearnNC, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Education. In addition to an article with specific ideas on using oral history in elementary, middle school, and high school classrooms, web page includes links to other resources. Valuable ideas for classroom teachers. <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/oh-curriculum0406-1> (Accessed 3/10/08)

Whitman, G. *Oral history as an educational methodology.* Extensive bibliography, some citations including links (some of which are dead), to articles on teaching and using oral history in the classroom. Last updated 2005 (Accessed 3/10/08)

[http://www.doingoralhistory.org/sources/Oral\\_Hist\\_Educ\\_Methodology.htm](http://www.doingoralhistory.org/sources/Oral_Hist_Educ_Methodology.htm) (Accessed 3/10/08)

Pittsburgh census/demographics information, ethnic information today

Rotstein, Gary. “Ethnic neighborhoods becoming thing of past.” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Sunday, May 25, 2003. Map of ethnicity of neighborhoods at

<http://www.post-gazette.com/popup.asp?img=/images2/20030525ethnic.jpg>; article at <http://www.post-gazette.com/localnews/20030525ethnicreg3p3.asp> (Accessed 3/13/08)

Allegheny County demographic data, 2000 census (published by University Center for Social and Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh, 2002): Access via <http://www.ucsur.pitt.edu/CensusDataPage.htm> (Accessed 3/31/08)

*Pittsburgh City Planning* web site:

[http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/census\\_map.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/census_map.html) (Accessed 3/31/08)

### Music recordings

*Shaped by steel: traditional music and stories from Southwestern Pennsylvania.*

Pittsburgh: Steel Heritage Corporation, 2005. An amazing collection of music from many of the heritages that have made Pittsburgh Pittsburgh. Includes booklet with information about each song and performer. From that booklet: “For over 125 years, steel shaped and reshaped the Pittsburgh region in southwestern Pennsylvania. Even as native-born and immigrants adapted to industry’s demands, so their children’s folkways continued to evolve as the region changed. Now, while most of the steel mills and coal mines are gone from the river valley and hollows, descendants of the many cultural groups who toiled there maintain their ethnic and occupational traditions in towns across the region. By presenting traditional singers, musicians and story-tellers from their communities, the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area honors the thousands of workers and their families who built the region, and the groups who have since come to participate in the region’s revitalization. They are the living legacy of steel.”