The *Mavericks’ Education Journal*, which is made possible through support from Graduate PASS, provides opportunities for the presentation of divergent opinions, teaching practices, and research by educators and future educators. The views expressed herein are those of their authors and do not represent the official position of the editors, faculty advisor, advisory board, or the faculty and administration of Mercy College. For further information, or to join the advisory board, contact: Dr. Eric Martone, faculty advisor, emartone@mercy.edu, 914-674-7618. The *Mavericks’ Education Journal* welcomes submissions from Mercy College students, faculty, alumni, and education professionals and reserves the right to edit them for publication. Articles may be submitted to: maverickseducationjournal@gmail.com
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Welcome to the third issue of the *Mavericks’ Education Journal: An Innovative Guide to Teaching!*

In our first section, contributors share insights into their lives through creative writing. Some pieces recount personal experiences in the authors’ childhoods, while others tell of defining episodes or influences that marked the writers’ relationships with their chosen field, mathematics.

In the second section, we explore different approaches to instruction through the creative design of curricula across different subjects. Three of the four lesson units we examine in this issue may be part of the overall social studies field, but the diversity of topics highlights the authors’ innovative pedagogical approaches to making the material relevant, educative and, importantly, interesting.

Our third section gives readers a historical perspective of mathematics. Numbers sometime challenge students. Most students don’t know the history behind the specific math units they are learning. Perhaps the historical significance of these unique trailblazers in the world of math can be enlightening and inspiring.

Our fourth and final section includes book, film, and museum reviews. These works can be used as a supplement to instruction. They provide insight and are aligned with major historical, political, and social themes.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue of the *Mavericks’ Education Journal*. We could not have made this journal without the hard work of all the students whose submissions are contained in these pages. Consequently, we would like to thank them for making this issue possible. We would also like to thank those faculty members who contributed submissions and/or nominated student work: Dr. Carol Gladstone, Dr. Terri Germain-Williams, and Dr. Eric Martone.
Part One: Creative Writing
The Ride to Paradise

Tora A. Suber

I grew up in a small town called Coatesville, about thirteen miles east of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, also known as Amish Country. It was nicknamed Steel City because Lukens Steel Company is located there, and is now called ArcelorMittal, which occupies a large portion of the town. There is a railroad track that begins at this company and ends near the Amish country. The home I grew up in was about five-hundred feet from a section of the steel company. The fence that was supposed to keep us out had a big enough hole that we could slither through.

I was nine years old, and my cousins were fourteen and fifteen. One day, we were so bored with fishing under the bridge, we decided to hop an empty train car. We knew the route because when we had gone shopping for school clothes at the outlets in Lancaster, we had seen the train go up Route 30, also named Old Lincoln Highway. Marlo and Jonas were male cousins of mine, so I knew they would protect me as they always did. Besides, I was the biggest tomboy around; I could hang tough. Grandma had given us grub, so we would not get hungry while we were fishing. Having eaten the snacks, we were ready to venture off. I could only imagine how far we might go. I prayed my momma would not find out.

After we had been in the train car for only five minutes, it came to a screeching halt. Did the yardmasters hear us? We darted to a dark corner of the train car, and we could hear the workers walking alongside the train tracks. “All clear here,” one of them said. Then the train horn sounded, and we slowly began to move again. It was a close call. Our quest could have been cut short. A few minutes later, bells were ringing, and the train came to the railroad crossing intersection. My cousins and I could see the cars stopped on each side as we went by. I felt free. We were up to no good, but it felt awesome.

About twenty minutes into the ride, the train stopped again. Paradise, Pennsylvania, was approximately five minutes from our intended destination. Initially, we could see only two of the train crew, but about fifteen of the crew hopped off the train. The train cars began detaching. “Oh snap,” my older cousin said. We had to make a
power move. Marlo jumped off; I was next, and Jonas was last. We sprinted through the cornfields, so we could hide. I fell a few times, but I got right back up. There were mud stains all over me. I knew my mom was going to punish me if she found out.

What were we going to do? Should we continue with our journey? Marlo suggested we head back home, while it was still light out. We agreed with him. The walk home turned out to be more fun than the ride up. We got to see some Amish men building a barn, we touched a few horses, and we took some corn for my grandma to cook for Sunday dinner. There was horse and cow manure all over the place. I dry heaved so many times because of the smell in the air. The thirty-minute ride up turned out to be a two-hour trip to get back home by foot. I found a lot of mementos. I picked up some old hand balls, a deflated basketball, and a horseshoe. Jonas grabbed the basketball from me, and I began screaming at him. I needed that ball. Someone had always stolen mine when I went to play at the park.

The excursion was exciting. Luckily, no one was injured, except for a few knee bruises and scratches we managed to acquire as we hurried through the fields. I was able to change my clothes before my mom could see the mess I had made of them. It seemed like a Huck Finn moment in life, an adventure to remember; however, nobody was trying to hunt us down. Our train ride was like floating on a river, and we safely made it back home. Exploring the other side of Steel City set us free, and it surely beat out fishing for the day. Wandering that day gave me my first lesson about independence, even though I was not supposed to go. This moment in life showed me that I wanted to see parts of the world beyond Steel City. Small towns were not for me.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id2BYuiF1_U&feature=youtu.be

The Long Walk Home

Jazmin Blanco-LiMarzi

The sun was rising, and I had spent most of the night wandering aimlessly through my hometown in Spain. The cobbled roads, covered with morning dew, were glistening, and the loose stones were piercing through the soles of my stilettos. The sound of my grandfather’s voice resonated in my head, “You need to be home by 5am!” After I glanced at my watch, I looked around for my cousin and realized she was running my way. We needed a taxi, and we needed one fast.

“We don’t have taxi drivers working at 6:30 on Sunday mornings,” the call center said. I quickly thought about how easy it would have been to get a taxi in New York. I thanked the man and hung up the phone.

The hour and a half walk from the main part of town to our homes was brisk and nerve-racking. We reminisced about how many times we had done the same trail in a group, and we decided it was better that way. The smell of fresh cut grass and the sound of cows mooing followed us on our journey. We had taken our shoes off, let down our hair, and our sixteen year-old “perfect” image was ruined.
When we finally arrived to the narrow dirt road leading up to our houses, my cousin went left, and I continued straight up the hill. I opened the gate as quietly as I could and walked across the wet lawn toward the wooden door. I turned the knob to the left, to the right, and I stopped. I took a few steps back and looked up to see a closed balcony door. I walked around the perimeter and looked for the spare key.

As I sat on the wooden bench against the old stone house, I realized my grandfather would be up soon, if he wasn’t already, and he would be watching my every move from the window. I was tired, cold, and disappointed in myself. Then, I heard the noise of the door drag against the floor, and I turned to see my grandfather ready for a day of housework.

I could see the look of relief on his face when he saw me sitting there and I said, “Good Morning. Sorry for being late.” Like a lumberjack about to go cut a tree, he picked up his axe and while walking away he said, “Good Night.” I sat for a minute and knew what I had to do. I put on a sweat suit, shoved my feet into my boots, called out for my grandfather, and I headed toward the woods.

The Basement Pool

Susane Kocaj

My brother and I always seemed to get ourselves into trouble one way or another. I can vividly remember one particular time when we wanted to transform our basement into a pool. And so it went, Chris and I planned yet another adventurous task.

“Get the hose and I’ll pull it through the bathroom window,” I said to my brother as he struggled to carry the long, green hose from outside. Standing on top of the toilet seat cover, I yelled, “No, Chris! Grab it with your hands, and let the rest of it drag!” Through the window, I could smell the scent of freshly washed clothes that hung on the line outside. I stood and watched my brother stumble and drop the hose over and over again. “I can’t do it! It’s too heavy and it’s dripping all over me,” my brother whined. Finally, he had gotten the hose through the window. Excitedly, Chris turned on the water and ran back into the house. I could hear the kitchen door swing open, and my grandmother telling him to stop running. Almost falling over himself, my brother made his way back down the stairs. Our bathroom was now in the process of transforming into a wade pool.

“Grandma keeps all her flour packages on the shelf in the other room” said my brother. “How about we use the flour for a sandbox?” he asked. He was brilliant! I hadn’t thought of that idea! One by one, as our pool began filling, we started tearing open white packages of flour in the other room. My grandmother must have had at least ten bags set aside for her baking extravaganzas; we had opened each one of them. As I looked over, the water began trickling down the step that led from the bathroom to the laundry room. I walked over, completely covered in white flour, and stepped into the puddle. “Suz, get a cup of water and bring it to the sand!” my brother exclaimed. “I want to make a sand-castle, and I have to wet it first.” Hurriedly, I filled a
detergent cup with water and ran it over to my brother. He proceeded to wet the sand, as the now gooey flour began sticking to his hands. “Yuck!” Chris yelled. “This isn’t like sand at all!” Meanwhile, I slid across the laundry room from one end to the other, splashing around in the water; I was an entertainer in the making. By now, water was everywhere. It had made its way into the bathroom, down the step, throughout the laundry room, and was trailing into the basement hallway. If I had been smarter, I would have thought of a way to contain all that water into one space. This wasn’t a pool; in fact, it was just a big, sloppy mess. I went over to the flour and began trying to clean it up, but the more I tried, the messier it got. “Chris, go turn the hose off!” I barked. I was now an annoyed child. My brother ran back up the stairs, leaving traces of wet, floury footprints all over the carpet. Mission accomplished; he had turned the water off and began heading back. Just then, my grandmother let out a loud screech and we knew that we were doomed! She followed him down the wet, sticky stairs and almost fainted. Our beautiful, finished basement was now a flooded and chaotic mess, engulfed in water and flour. She immediately called our parents and told us to begin cleaning. She gave us mops, brooms, rags, and a garbage can. We were to take as long as we needed to scrub the basement clean. Afterward, we would be punished for our wrongful act. I think we learned our lesson well, or at least that one.

As mischievous as we were, this moment was very important to me. For one, it reminded me to be thankful my children haven’t yet pulled any stunts like my brother and I did! Secondly, when my brother and I get together, the conversations are always interesting; we sit and talk about all of our adventures together as children.
Math was my favorite subject in school growing up. In my early elementary school years, I remember learning how to count, add, and subtract up to 10. I thought I was so smart. My mother checked my homework. Afterward, I used to ask her to test me. She would ask me all the combinations of adding up to 10. Then she would ask me all the combinations of subtracting from 10. It was at this stage that my confidence in learning math began to grow.

I was fortunate to have a very supportive family growing up. At family gatherings, I would almost always ask someone to test me on my math knowledge. It wasn’t because I thought I needed help with math, but more because I had fun trying to answer the questions. I used to think of it as a game. I suppose at that time, I was learning through play, but I didn’t really grasp the concept of “learning through play” because I was simply having fun.

The multiplication table was introduced to me when I was in the third grade. I had to memorize each multiplication number family from my textbook. My teacher would have multiplication examples written on the blackboard and she would call on students to come up and figure out the answer. This was very scary for me at the time. I had never walked up to the front of the class to do a math problem on the blackboard before. I think I was more afraid of getting laughed at than getting the wrong answer. But to my surprise, the butterflies in my stomach slowly started to disappear after each trip to the blackboard. At that time, the teacher didn’t care whether you volunteered. She called upon you whether your hand was raised or not.

One of the best Christmas gifts I received as a child was a Speak & Math game! I think my brother, in turn, received a Speak & Spell. I thought the Speak & Math game was so cool. It helped reinforce my understanding of multiplication tables, division tables, addition, and subtraction. Whenever I got the answer correct, the game would speak to me and say “you are right!” or “that is correct!” Some of the other cool features/games the Speak & Math had were:

1) greater than and less than
2) number stumper
3) word problems

Including below are some samples of their responses.

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**Math Autobiographies**

In their methods of teaching mathematics course, future educators compose a “math autobiography” in response to the following prompt:

Write a mathematics autobiography focusing on key mathematical moments that you have experienced either as a student or a teacher of mathematics. Why do these math moments stand out? What is it about these math moments that continue to resonate, that continue to give you either joy or discomfort? What role did your parents, teachers, siblings, and friends play in shaping your current disposition about mathematics and your mathematical achievements? In your paper address, what “mathematics” means to you and discuss your level of confidence both as a student and as a teacher of mathematics.

Included below are some samples of their responses.

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**John Andrades**

Math was my favorite subject in school growing up. In my early elementary school years, I remember learning how to count, add, and subtract up to 10. I thought I was so smart. My mother checked my homework. Afterward, I used to ask her to test me. She would ask me all the combinations of adding up to 10. Then she would ask me all the combinations of subtracting from 10. It was at this stage that my confidence in learning math began to grow.

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1) greater than and less than
2) number stumper
3) word problems
I would double check my homework answers by typing the problem on my Speak & Math. I had figured that if my game said it was correct, my answer must have been correct as well.

In elementary school, math was all about numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students had to solve their classwork and homework problems with their minds as their calculators. As a future educator, I realize that math is done in numerous ways, with or without the use of calculators. More importantly, I think math is really a means of helping to build students’ confidence. When a student has confidence, he/she can attack any problem without fear of getting a less than desirable result. This applies to a student’s academic career and his/her real world experience.

Michelle Vasquez-Gomez

Mathematics has always been a subject that I found to be somewhat difficult. I never had any trouble with math in school until I hit my senior year. I was taking algebra and I remember having a hard time. I recall that it was a period in my life when I did not care much for school, something I am sure added to my troubles. I remember I had math during first period and I never made it to class. Traveling from the Bronx to downtown New York City for high school, I never made it on time that year. I had a math teacher who also happened to be the dean of the school. I straightened up after he threatened to fail me and therefore prevent me from graduating. I started arriving to class on time and I tried my best to understand the material. I really found that class difficult. If I’m not mistaken, it had trigonometry as well, which made it even worse. Luckily, I had a good friend who had taken the class and remembered the material. My friend really helped me during my last term, which allowed me to graduate and pass the math Regents Exam. I graduated with a Regents-level high school diploma that year. If it had not been for that teacher, putting his foot down, and my friend helping me, I would not have graduated on time.

That math teacher helped me that year by actually caring. I had had good teachers, but none who actually put me in my place as far as missing classes. He threatened to fail me and let me know my behavior was unacceptable. I needed to pass, so I studied and tried my best. I also recall that the material was not easy and the teacher was not always clear in his explanations. My friend was able to show me a few techniques that she had learned, and that is how I was able to pass the class. This experience helped me to be better at math and gave me a great respect for it. Math is not an easy subject, and I believe that if you are not taught different manners in which to solve the problem, you can become frustrated and give up.

I recently took a math class for elementary school teachers. I was amazed at what I learned. I have never taught a class, much less a math class, but I feel much more confident in being able to do so after taking this course. I only had one undergraduate level math course prior to that—college algebra—which I took in 1996. I learned that math could be approached in many different ways, and that an effective teacher should show students
different techniques for the same problem. A math problem can have various solutions, an important element I was never taught. I remember being taught only one way; what is called “mental math” was not taught to me when I went to school. I really felt better after I took this course because teaching math without a strong background in the subject can be a frightening thought. I would never want to teach the wrong concept to a classroom full of young children. It would be a failure for me personally. I really want to teach and help children know that math is not that scary. In fact, it can actually be fun.

I have discovered that although everyday life may not require a scientific calculator, you do need to know the basics of mathematics. Everyone needs to know how to add and subtract, multiply and divide. A person has to be, at the very least, able to set up an equation to be able to come to the correct conclusion. A strong foundation in math would help all children. I am not 100 percent confident when it comes to math, but I feel that I will do what I need to do to teach my students. I would like them to know that I do care. Furthermore, I want them to achieve. Math does not have to be a scary process; it can be altered to different learning styles. Some students may need to go over the material a few times, while some will “get it” right away. Either way, I will be there, willing to help them as my friend helped me back in high school. She made me feel comfortable and confident at a very uncertain time. I will always remember that.

Marlene Troncoso

Mathematics is the process of applying numerical reasoning, quantitative reasoning, linguistic reasoning, symbolic reasoning, spatial reasoning, logical reasoning, diagrammatic reasoning, and reasoning about causality to obtain correct results. While applying these mathematical skills, one must possess the ability to handle abstractions. Mathematics can be used in all aspects of our lives. We can use mathematics to determine how high the temperature of the oven must be before placing the dish inside. We can use mathematics to determine how much gasoline to put in the car to take us from work to home. Math is for everyone and we can all do math.

As a child, I was never a mathematics fanatic. I found mathematics to be difficult to understand. I received little help from my elementary school teachers. However, my parents were dedicated to helping me achieve my true potential. Every afternoon, my mother worked with me for several hours on homework, reviewing materials, and clarifying lessons that I did not comprehend. She was patient, caring, and understanding. My father helped me during the weekend. He was as caring and understanding as my mother. They were always giving me extra worksheets to complete and quizzing me on the spot. I loved those pop quizzes because my parents always rewarded me with candy when I found the correct answer.

My little sister, who is two years younger than I am, loves mathematics, is great with numbers, and can quickly understand any topic thrown her way. When we were younger, this motivated me to work harder. I wanted to be a good role model for her. We often worked together on homework and helped each other study. She loved helping me prepare for tests. She pretended to be the teacher and loved giving me multiplication pop quizzes.

While in 6th grade, I was assigned a project where the numbers 1 through 20 were given and my job was to use only integers 1 through 5 to find the results. I could only use each number once. I could use positive and
negative numbers with addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. This was a difficult task, but through a series of trial and error, I was able to accomplish it. Even though I found the task difficult, I did not give up. My parents were very proud of my work. This math moment continues to resonate in my memory as a joyous one. It allowed me to understand that even when a task is difficult, the pride felt from succeeding is worth any struggle that I might experience. I was beginning to enjoy mathematics.

Throughout the years, I have realized that I learn math best by doing it. It is not enough for me to read the material. I must apply the concepts to get a true understanding of the material. Therefore, while reading a math problem, I must attempt to solve the problem to gain a true understanding of the task. I often prefer to work alone because I find myself easily upset by people who do not stay focused on the assignment. Whenever I get stuck in a problem, I do not give up. I try to find different strategies to solve the problem. This is something that I apply in every area of my life. I never give up. I try my best and if at first I do not succeed, I try and try again.

Today, as a future math teacher, I feel confident of my mathematical abilities as a student and as a teacher. I will make every effort to teach my students to not be content by knowing how to solve a problem in a specific way, but to attempt to solve the problem using an array of different strategies. I will facilitate their learning and assist in activating their prior knowledge while making connections with new knowledge. For example, while doing division of fractions, I will advise them to use their prior knowledge of multiplication of fractions. Moreover, I am confident in my abilities to help students achieve their true potential. I will give them multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of material. I will review the lesson as many times as necessary, make myself available for before school and after-school tutoring, and will adjust my instruction as necessary. I will also tell my students to never give up. If at first they do not succeed, they must try and try again.

**David Swenson**

There are several points within my past that have contributed toward my overall perspective, focus, and direction on mathematics within my life. These include episodes during my high school and college education, but they also reflect the influences of individual teachers, family, and friends with whom I have interacted over the course of many years. The culmination of these experiences has led me to pursue of a master’s degree in education so that I can teach high school mathematics to young students in the hope that they can recognize the importance the field contributes to their overall lives.

One of the initial experiences that deeply influenced my path within the field of mathematics occurred during my 10th grade geometry class. After performing well in 9th grade algebra, I was placed into a much higher-level geometry class with a teacher known for challenging his students academically. This teacher also happened to be one of my coaches on the high school football team, which doubled my expectations of how he would view my performance. The episode occurred when the teacher asked us to solve a number of difficult geometry proofs for homework. At the time, I was still developing my overall understanding of what exactly a proof entailed and how to walk systematically through the steps to prove various theorems. After spending hours
working on several of the proofs without success, I finally was able to walk a proof from back-to-front (i.e. taking the end-point of the proof and tying the necessary steps back to the original theorem to prove it). It proved to be a sort of watershed moment when I was then able to replicate my success across the other proofs. I remember how excited I was that I had finally understood and was able to implement the concept of proofs. This experience, along with others, built my confidence and interest in the mathematics field and piqued my curiosity for the logical, reasoned relationships that exist within the content area.

A second episode occurred shortly after my 10th grade year. I decided to attend the Space Camp training facility in Huntsville, Alabama with a friend. Spanning over several weeks, the camp allowed individuals to experience the different aspects of the space program, including astronaut training, mission control work, and payload specialists. During the mission control training, we were able to simulate various scenarios with other teams working in the astronaut and payload specialist groups. It was during this exercise that the instructors played out a scenario that emulated the Apollo 13 mission, during which the spaceship suffered a crisis and the team within the mission control group needed to work out how to solve the issue. Though looking back it seems a bit contrived, for a 15 year old, it was a really exciting experience. The solution to the issue revolved around our team putting together a new re-entry plan after analyzing the various spacecraft and environmental factors that were involved. The overall experience impacted me to a large degree, as it really energized my excitement for the math/engineering fields and would ultimately start to point me toward my college major—mechanical engineering, with a focus in aeronautical engineering.

These initial experiences shaped the direction I ultimately chose to pursue, which was an engineering degree; however, throughout my decision process, a number of friends and family impacted the process. Some of my closest friends in high school were also drawn to fields related my own, with several entering environmental and software engineering. The competition I enjoyed with these friends in high school also pushed me to excel within all of my classes and ultimately impacted my direction within college. In reviewing the relative impact between friends, family, and teachers on my life, I think both the competitive and supportive aspects of my friends overwhelmingly had the greatest impact on my academic performance and later pursuits in terms of college major.

In reviewing my current pursuit of a master’s degree in education, I have a general level of confidence in my mathematical skills based on my background of achievement within high school, college, and later within various professional industries, including working as an analyst within defense contracting and working within the finance industry. I feel that the field of mathematics has impacted my life at numerous points along my path and helped to organize how I view life. Though I may not yet have direct teaching experience, I feel that my overall wealth of experience and knowledge on the various facets of how mathematics can impact a person’s life will greatly contribute to the students I hope to teach.
Mardochee Chaperon

Some of us, who had the opportunity to attend school, probably had a teacher who had a positive influence on our academic achievement. Maybe that teacher saw some potential in us, wanted us to reach our goal, and also didn’t want us to live a mediocre life. We were probably struggling with some subjects, and that teacher helped us and motivated us to do better. For some of us, we then probably started to like school or particularly that subject.

For me it was the contrary; I developed a dislike for mathematics after I had a particular professor. Prior to this professor, I didn’t have problems doing addition, subtraction, or division and I knew my multiplication tables by heart. The easy ride as I knew it came to an end. This professor was the type of teacher who didn’t allow foolish things to happen in his classroom. When he asked questions, he expected the right answers. When a classmate would ask, “Who is your math teacher?” if you said this professor’s name, that student would say, “good luck!” He liked to send students to the blackboard to solve word problems. You couldn’t hide from him. While you doing the exercise on the blackboard, he would also make sure that you were explaining your procedure to the whole the class. The moment you said something wrong, you would just wait for that ruler. I would pray in my heart that he wouldn’t pick me, but that didn’t happen. I remembered doing an exercise and I came up with the wrong answer. Before I knew it, I felt that ruler hitting me. I grew up in the islands, where teachers are allowed to punish you.

I often would go home unhappy, and I was afraid to tell my mother what was going on in class. If I told her the professor punished me, she would think I was doing something wrong in class. Finally, I told my mother what was going on. She asked one of my older brothers to help me with my homework. When my brother tutored me, I understood everything. The moment I entered this professor’s class, however, everything my brother helped me with just went out the window. I told my brother what happened; he told me that I was afraid of my teacher and my fear was making me unable me to do well. He said I was going to have to come up with something; otherwise, I wasn’t going to be able to do well. In my mind, I tried to imagine another picture of this professor. I pictured him as my brother teaching the classroom. I was happy when the semester was over; I didn’t have to deal with him anymore. I passed his class.

When I thought I was done with this professor, I had another one of equal formidability. While she didn’t use the ruler, she made you write lines when her assignments were not done on time. She liked to send students to the blackboard; it didn’t matter if you volunteered or not. She taught us geometry. Oh my! Sin, cos, and tan was so hard for me to understand. Every time we had to do an exercise in geometry, I felt like a foreigner living on a strange planet. I fought myself through it. She didn’t really have the patience to go over her materials. If she explained twice, she expected you to get it. That didn’t work for me. I was having a hard time. My sister had had the same professor, so she was willing to help me. My sister helped, but I still couldn’t get it. My sister came up with different techniques to explain geometric concepts to me using objects and pictures to make it easier for me to understand. I barely passed the class.

My junior year in High School, I had another professor who impacted me. He was the kind of teacher who would take his sweet time to explain an equation or whatever it was until you got it. He wasn’t in a rush; he
always made himself available to his students. When I was in this professor’s class, I started to like math a little bit. His teaching method was easy to understand. He allowed us to use any format or technique to come up with our answers.

I remember a conversation with my siblings; I told them that mathematics was so hard to understand, and that I didn’t like it. They told me that there was nothing wrong with the subject; it was just my past experiences learning it. They pointed out the first professor I discussed in this essay and assumed that I had carried that fear with me. They said, without trying, I just assumed that I was not good in math. My mother also told me that I couldn’t stay away from mathematics. Mathematics, she said, was an everyday life experience. She also said that I was doing mathematics every day without noticing.

Not long ago, I concluded, I still have that fear in me. All those years, I had that discomfort about mathematics. I think that professor did play a part of it. When I was in his class, I thought that I was dumb. I thought I wouldn’t ever be able to understand math. Now, I want to change my way of thinking. I want to give mathematics a chance. I won’t let that fear overcome me. I am ready to take that challenge. No more fear, I am confident that I can do it.

Alisha Giovanti

When I hear the word “math” my immediate thought is, “the universal language of numbers.” Unlike written language, which is often immersed with cultural connotations and rules that may leave non-natives behind, I always believed that if you understood numbers in one place, you would know numbers in another place. You may need to learn a new topic or two, but never a new language!

However, after my recent student teaching experience, this view is somewhat changing as I learned how differently people from different age groups understand math. As a teacher of mathematics, I quickly learned that my “native mathematics tongue” did not always reach my students because of their current developmental level. Every topic seemed abstract to my elementary students, so I was pushed to break out of the normal mathematics mindset I was accustomed to and think like someone learning a new language. Even in a brief lesson when I used the concept of “greater than” because it was obvious to me, the blank faces saying “than what” taught me that math needs to be broken down in as much detail as written language. Indeed, this is because math means more than numbers; math is the process of examining, organizing, and creating numerical expression.

My early perspective of mathematics clearly originates from the “cookie cutter” math style I learned during my schooling. I was given math problems with one clear path to get an answer, so acing it simply meant following the directions. The occasional intriguing problem was given as a reward for finishing work, but the goal was always memorization. I was blessed with a good memory, so this worked well for me. My confidence in math grew as my teachers gave “boy vs. girl” math competitions—which I now realize were just timed drills where we mindlessly raced to do as many problems as we could in a minute. I was even granted the title of “Math Queen” by one high school teacher for my 100 average and getting the highest score on the Math A Regents. This
esteemed title made me feel special amongst my peers, so all throughout my years as a student my skillful ability to memorize made me feel like a confident mathematician in front of my friends and teachers.

Unfortunately, this confidence in my mathematic abilities began to change as my role shifted from student to teacher. As a student, I could passively listen and robotically answer questions based on teacher explanations; however, as a student teacher, I needed to understand how to provide these explanations. Perhaps for the first time in years, I really needed to think of the process that is math! For example, when I tried to teach my second grade students the ones, tens, and hundreds place values by drawing and labeling them on the board, half of the students (mainly boys) still could not identify this on their own. The next day, I used cubic models with individual one unit cubes, ten sticks, and one hundred blocks where students played with them in groups to show certain numbers with correct place values. To my satisfaction, by the end of this experience, most of these students understood the lesson. I was taught a valuable lesson about differentiating instruction to meet the learning styles of my students. Furthermore, because this was the first time I really saw the different learning styles in my class of boys (predominately kinesthetic) and girls (predominantly verbal/written), this lesson has stayed with me as a reminder that gender differences do exist, even though we, as teachers, should not always be directed by them.

Similar experiences occurred when I was teaching my students subtraction. In my second grade inclusion class, the students were having a hard time remembering when and what to borrow, even though we used drawings and hands on manipulative sets to practice. I decided to draw on their musical interests, just from what I heard them do during free time. After practicing a song for two days, the majority of students were able to correctly subtract with borrowing! This experience has stayed with me because it reminds me that knowing how to teach your students does not just come from test results and observable learning behavior. Effective teaching also requires taking an active role in learning about your students’ personalities and using a personal touch to reach even the most difficult students. After all, they probably need this extra touch the most!

As a teacher of mathematics, I may not feel as confident as I wish to be in the content area, but I know that taking on the role of the learner with a process-focused approach will help me learn the skills I need to become an effective mathematics facilitator. I do not wish to recreate the mathematics instruction from my schooling because I want to create more for my students. I want my students to really understand that math is a process—not just a set of skills to be memorized—and they can find success solving problems using solutions that are relevant to their own lives. In this way, I am confident that I will become an effective mathematics teacher as I push my students to become effective mathematic explorers.
Kerry McAuliffe

As I reflect over my mathematical history, very few positive experiences are conjured up. Words like “Embarrassment!” “Shame!” “Frustration!” and “Failure!” come to the forefront of my mind in bright red menacing letters. Of course, it has not all been bad, but the negative experiences stick out more than the positive ones.

One of my earliest memories is from second grade in Mrs. Perkins’ class. Every Friday, we had a timed math quiz on multiplication. If we completed the quiz in the allotted time and only had one or two mistakes, you would move to the next level (the next number, so if you completed multiples of three, you would move up to four). The level you were on was displayed on a banner in the front of the classroom. I did not do well on these quizzes and became particularly stuck on multiples of the number six. For weeks, I would take the quiz to no avail and had a deeper and deeper feeling of failure. I went to a tutor; I practiced with my parents and still could not finish the quiz. Failure! In what felt like an act of pity, Mrs. Perkins finally advanced me to the next level, even though I never successfully completed the quiz.

Math continued to be a struggle for me as time went on. I miraculously made it into the advanced math class in seventh grade only to be sent to the general math class after a few months following a number of low marks. Embarrassment! In college, I was required to take one math class. I believe it was calculus, but I have blocked out some of the experience, so my memory is blurry. I do remember taking the course three times before I passed. Shame! Some of it was my own fault. I should have been more diligent in doing my homework. I should have stayed awake in class. I should have gone to class more often. The feelings of frustration and hopelessness, and, I admit, my own laziness, prevented me from consistently attending class and asking for help. Frustration! Finally, I was a senior and had no choice but to pass this course—if I wanted to graduate. I went to every class (almost every class), met with the teacher during her office hours, attended study groups, attempted to do the work and studied. Somehow, I was still doing poorly in the class. Frustration! When it came time for the final, I studied harder than I have studied for anything in my life. If I didn’t get above a 70% on the final, I would not graduate. I remember taking the test and feeling good about it afterward. Scores were to be posted online, and I obsessively checked and refreshed the page that would determine my future (while this is slightly dramatic, at the time I felt that way). In what seemed to be an eternity, the scores were finally posted. I scored 73%. I should have been elated. I was going to graduate with the rest of my classmates, but part of me felt some disappointment. I studied so hard. I put all I had into passing this exam, and I only got a 73%. How was that possible? At least, I thought, I would be done with math forever; but here is it creeping back into my life.

I grew up as the younger sister of a “golden child.” My brother, who is five years my senior, touched something and it turned to gold. This is not to say he did not have his own challenges (maybe), but academically, socially, and in sports, he excelled. With that being said, he was a hard act to follow. My parents were great about not putting pressure on me to be in all AP classes like my brother, and at the same time, they were very motivating. The pressure to be as good as my brother came from within me, yet the pressure didn’t motivate me like it would some; instead it all seemed impossible. My parents did their best to help me with my math homework. I
went to a tutor on and off from second grade all the way to my senior year in high school. My parents did not get upset when I did not get good grades in my math classes; instead, they motivated me to keep trying.

While my friends did not compare grades or act superior if they were in a higher-level math class, there was still the general understanding that if you were in a higher-level math class, you were obviously smarter. Most of my friends were in the higher-level math classes, so at times (very much of my own doing), I felt inferior and stupid compared to my friends. They may not have been comparing grades, but I was definitely comparing myself to my peers who excelled in math, and it left me having a pity party for one.

I did have one good year where math class was not a dreaded event. It was sophomore year in high school, and Mr. Dooley, my math teacher, was one of the most dedicated, fun, easy-going, “happy-to-help without any judgment” teachers I have ever had. He was in his office by 7 am every morning and stayed until at least 5 pm. He had desks for students in his tiny office so multiple students could get help at the same time. On some days, Mr. Dooley would stay until I had completed whatever team sport I was on and help me study for a test. It was the first and only year I ever received an A in a math class. I understand that at the time I was focused and working hard, so that A was not entirely Mr. Dooley’s doing, but it was because of him and his easygoing nature and ability to make math class fun instead of stressful that I was motivated to work hard. Mr. Dooley made math seem attainable. While Mr. Dooley helped me achieve an A in math, his dedication and ability to approach difficult concepts in a fun manner are also some of the reasons I would like to be a teacher.

Mathematics to me means a whole lot of jumbled up numbers, terminology, symbols, word problems that involve a train leaving at one time and another train leaving at a different time, and red ink. If I step outside my anti-mathematical bubble, I am able to appreciate mathematics in a way I could not when I was younger. Math is concrete, it is logical, and there is usually just one answer. I do not think math is trying to be tricky. Unfortunately, I have set up a brain block where I refuse to let math in or even focus when it is being explained.

Because I currently work with young children who are on the ASD spectrum, math problems rarely exceed number identification and rote counting. It’s the kind of math I can do or teach without breaking a sweat. If thrown into an eighth grade general education math class, I just hope I wouldn’t get gobbled up before I could even get my name out. As a student, I am not confident in mathematics. As a teacher, I am even less confident because I know I cannot teach math if I do not truly understand it. I even worry about not being able to help my future children with their math homework. I would like to improve my ability and confidence in mathematics to become a more effective teacher. I am not sure how to do this, but I am hoping this class will be the start.
Part Two: Units and Lesson Plans
Lesson One: Introduction to Parts of Speech

Grade/Subject: ESL Group (Ages 10 to 14)

Objectives: 1) Assess prior knowledge of parts of speech. 2) Introduce parts of speech with examples.

Standards: Common Core ELA

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6, grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel); c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech; d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Do Now: Pre-Test (see below).

Prior Knowledge: All students are between 10 and 14 years old and may have different amounts of prior knowledge. A pre-test will determine what they know as a group and as individuals.

Classwork Activity: Students will exchange papers and grade each other’s papers as the teacher displays an answer key on the Smart Board and reads the answers to the students. Then, students will give the papers back to each other. Using whole group instruction, go over each word in the box and identify which part of speech the word falls under. Students should justify their answers, asking questions in regard to which category is which. Make a list of students’ questions to pursue this week. Then, introduce students to “Nava C. Pip” and the many “misspellings” of her last name Pap, Pipi and Papi (Noun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, pronoun and preposition. And article, interjection, interrogative). Explain that according to traditional grammar, some sources suggest 8 parts of speech, while some suggest 9, and still others 10 parts of speech. Utilizing mnemonic and visual aids, explain the different parts of speech and the confusion surrounding which are correct. Explain that this week we will clear up all grammar rules by identifying the appropriate parts of speech for all words. We will combine some of these words so that by the end of the week, we will all be able to assign words to EIGHT parts of speech. But first, we will go over the traditional four that appear in Nava’s first name: Noun, Adjective, Verb, and Adverb. Tell students to be prepared to discuss these parts of speech tomorrow. Explain the homework assignment.

Assessments: Pre-Test, Formative Oral Assessment during whole group instruction, Homework to be collected the next day as an Exit Ticket.

Homework: Write a sentence on loose-leaf paper or type out and print. Use the parts of speech from TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR that we discussed today in your sentence. Identify each part of speech from
TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR in your sentence in a column below the sentence. Then, make a note of the parts of speech you weren’t able to do. Don’t worry if you cannot identify all the parts of speech. That’s why we are going over this topic! For example:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The – article quick – adjective brown- adjective
fox – noun jumps – verb over – preposition
the – article lazy – adjective dog - noun

I was not able to use adverbs, pronouns, conjunctives, interjections, and interrogatives in my sentence example.

Materials: 1) Pre-Test (see test below); 2) Visual Aid 1 on Parts of Speech (see picture below); 3) Visual Aid 2 on Parts of Speech (see picture below); 4) Student Supplies: Notebooks, Pens/Pencils, Loose-leaf paper. 5) Teacher Supplies: Smart Board, Smart Board Pens, Pointer

Parts of Speech Pre – Test

Please pick a word from the box that represents an example of each part of speech listed below. There may be more than one example for each. (Answer Key in italics.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>running</th>
<th>quickly</th>
<th>fast</th>
<th>pencil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pretty</td>
<td>walk</td>
<td>over</td>
<td>in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what</td>
<td>ouch</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>happy</td>
<td>furry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happily</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>five</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verb  running, walk

Noun  school, five, pencil

Pronoun  that, she

Adjective  pretty, fast, furry, happy

Adverb  quickly, happily

Conjunctions  and

Prepositions  over, in

Interjections  ouch
Articles the

Interrogatives who, what


Lesson Two: NAVA - Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs

Grade/Subject: ESL Group (Ages 10 to 14)

Objectives: 1) To define and give examples of Nouns. 2) To define and give examples of Adjectives. 3) To define and give examples of Verbs. 4) To define and give examples of Adverbs. 5) To define and explain Nominals. 6) To define and explain Verbals.

Standards: Common Core ELA

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6, grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel); c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech; d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Do Now: Fill out the worksheet according to the directions (see below).

Prior Knowledge: This may vary according to each individual student. They may be able to define and give examples of some of these terms, but not all.

Classwork Activity: Students will go over the Do Now as a class. Create a list on the Smart Board for students to copy in their notebooks. Make four columns for Noun, Verbs, Adjective, and Adverbs. Students will then volunteer the nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs they used in their homework assignments to complete the chart. As a class, come up and agree on definitions of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. Utilize the visual aids as starting points for discussion. Once the definitions have been made clear, explain Nominal Phrase; when you combine a noun and an adjective, you create something called a Noun Phrase or a Nominal Phrase. These phrases also can include the articles: A, An, and The. These articles are also often considered a different part of speech. But for our purposes, we will include them within the Nominal Phrase and NOT give them a different category in our parts of speech. There are only three of them, after all, and in order for the words to exist, they must be combined with a noun. In this way, we can get rid of one of the misspellings of NAVA C. PIP’s name! We will no longer have to deal with the misspelling of PAPI or PAP because we won’t include Articles in our
parts of speech list. Pronouns—which we will discuss in the next lesson—can also be part of the Nominal Phrase. Just as the noun phrase can combine nouns and their describing words, so can the verb phrase combine verbs and their describing words. Let us go back to our Do Now Sentences and pull out the Nominal and Verbal Phrases on the Smart Board. If there is time left, the students can also pull out the nominal and verbal phrases from their homework assignments in partner groups and then hand in their homework.

Source 1: http://www.posterenvy.com/servlet/the-1784/noun-parts-of-speech/Detail

Source 2: http://www.posterenvy.com/servlet/the-1787/verb-parts-of-speech/Detail

Source 3: http://www.posterenvy.com/servlet/the-1780/adjective-parts-of-speech/Detail

Source 4: http://www.posterenvy.com/servlet/the-1781/adverb-parts-of-speech/Detail

Assessments: Homework Assignment collected from the night before; Formative Assessment from Do Now; Additional Assessment from Do Now after Nominal and Verbal Phrase explanation.

Homework: Worksheet (see below).

Materials: 1) Work Sheet for Do Now (see below); 2) Visual Aid 1 on Parts of Speech (see Lesson 1); 3) Visual Aid 2 on Parts of Speech (see Lesson 1); 4) Visual Aid Cards: Noun, Verb, Adverb, Adjective; 5) Student Supplies: Notebooks, Pens, 2 colors of highlighters, green and yellow; 6) Teacher Supplies: Smart Board, Smart Board pens, extra highlighters; 7). Homework Worksheet.

DO NOW: Circle the verbs and underline the nouns in the following sentences.

Highlight the adjectives in yellow and the adverbs in green. Source: (www.worksheetworks.com)

1. Nancy ran to the post office because her package was extremely important and needed to be mailed immediately.

   Nominal Phrases - Nancy, the post office, her package; Verbal Phrases - ran, was extremely important, needed to be mailed immediately.

2. Mr. Johnson, the wonderful manager of the post office, quickly posted her precious package.

   Nominal Phrases - Mr. Johnson the wonderful manager, post office, her precious package; Verbal Phrases - quickly posted

3. A blue pencil is dangerously sitting on the corner of the desk.

   Nominal Phrases - A blue pencil, corner of the desk; Verbal Phrases - is dangerously sitting

4. A slimy bug is slowly crawling up the bumpy wall.
Nominal Phrases - A slimy bug, the bumpy wall; Verbal Phrases - is slowly crawling

5. I found five crisp dollars quietly sitting on the sacred ground.
   Nominal Phrases - I, five crisp dollars, the sacred ground; Verbal Phrases - found, quietly sitting

6. The new restaurant makes very delicious hamburgers.
   Nominal Phrases - The new restaurant, very delicious hamburgers; Verbal Phrases - makes

Homework sheet: (source: www.worksheetworks.com)
Please highlight the Nominal or Noun Phrase in Yellow and the Verbal Phrase in Green.

1. The empty swimming pool slowly filled with rain water.
2. Jonathan suddenly burst into the room with the news.
3. Sean surprised everyone with his high chemistry test score.
4. The old computer booted up successfully on the first try.
5. The red fire engine then turned on the siren and quickly sped away.
6. Alexander carefully wrote an essay about his vacation in rural New York.

Lesson Three: Pronouns and Interrogatives

Grade/Subject: ESL Group (Ages 10 to 14)

Objectives: 1) Define Pronouns and Give Examples. 2) Define Interrogatives and give Examples. 3) Explain how interrogatives are not a part of speech. 4) Explain how interrogatives can also be pronouns.

Standards: Common Core ELA

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6, grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel); c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech; d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Do Now: See worksheet below.
Prior Knowledge: Identify personal pronouns and utilize personal pronouns. Knowledge of the additional categories may vary by students. The students will most likely have heard of the words before, but not identified them as pronouns.

Class Activity: Go over Do Now. Students may be surprised to discover that words like “some” and “there” are pronouns. Define the different kinds of pronouns and give out graphic organizers for students to paste into their notes or punch holes in to put in a loose-leaf binder. Present blank worksheets for students to fill out as you go over them together on the Smart Board. Define pronouns as words that can be used in place of nouns. The first graphic organizer will contain pronouns that students are familiar with. These are the pronouns the students will be somewhat familiar with as they have used them in conversation, seen them in print, and used them in writing. However, they may not have identified them as pronouns before. The second graphic organizer will contain demonstrative, interrogative, and relative pronouns. These words can also be used to define or identify a person, place, thing, or idea. The third graphic organizer will identify examples of pronouns called the indefinite pronoun, and can be used to identify location or quantity of people, places, things, and ideas. Also, explain that interrogatives can be identified as pronouns and we will no longer consider them as a separate part of speech. Therefore, we can no longer confuse Nava C. Pip’s last name as Papi or Pipi! Then the class will play a game of pronoun Bingo. An example sheet is below. Each sheet will have a mix of pronouns and non-pronouns. Students will use highlighters to identify their pronoun and form the word BINGO—horizontally, vertically, and/or diagonally.

Assessments: Do Now worksheets; Format Assessment Orally, while creating Graphic Organizer and performing Bingo Game; Homework to be collected.

Homework: Identify Pronouns Worksheets

Source: www.worksheetworks.com

Materials: 1) Do Now worksheet; 2) Graphic Organizer 1; 3) Graphic Organizer 2; 4) Graphic Organizer 3; 5) Bingo Sheets; 6) Homework Worksheet; 7) Student Supplies: Notebooks, Pens/Pencils, Loose-leaf paper, Highlighters 7) Teacher Supplies: Smart Board, Smart Board Pens, extra highlighters, pointer.

DO NOW: Please underline the pronouns in the following sentences. (Answer key underlined.)

1) There was nothing left after the furniture sale was over.
2) Some of the desserts you brought for the party are still in the refrigerator.
3) The teacher has little patience with class clowns like you.
4) When I asked around, I found that no one wanted an extra day to study for the final exam.
5) Go get your dirty clothes out from under your bed and put them in the laundry basket.
6) After the lion finished eating, it laid down and began a long nap.
7) Once Logan figured out how, he had no trouble riding the bike.
### Graphic Organizer One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Pronouns</th>
<th>Object Pronouns</th>
<th>Possessive Adjectives</th>
<th>Possessive Pronouns</th>
<th>Reflexive Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Me</td>
<td>My</td>
<td>Mine</td>
<td>myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>Your</td>
<td>Yours</td>
<td>yourself/yourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>Her</td>
<td>Her</td>
<td>Hers</td>
<td>herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>Him</td>
<td>His</td>
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<tr>
<td>It</td>
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<td>Its</td>
<td>Its</td>
<td>itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
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<td>Theirs</td>
<td>themselves</td>
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<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Us</td>
<td>Our</td>
<td>Ours</td>
<td>ourselves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graphic Organizer Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrative Pronouns</th>
<th>Interrogative Pronouns</th>
<th>Relative Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This</td>
<td>Who</td>
<td>Who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
<td>Whom</td>
<td>Who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These</td>
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<td>There</td>
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</table>

### Graphic Organizer Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indefinite Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all, both, each, either, other, several, none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any, anyone, anybody, anything every, everyone, everybody, everything, some, someone, somebody, something, no one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>few, many, more, most, much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bingo Sheet Example

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<td>B</td>
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<td>O</td>
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<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>there</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>box</td>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sock</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>book</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>work</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>phone</td>
<td>Frankenstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mark</td>
<td>bottle</td>
<td>sing</td>
<td>email</td>
<td>nail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Homework Sheet:**

Please underline the pronoun in each sentence.

1) After Melissa finished the math test, she complained that it was too difficult.
2) Brian drew a picture, and I think it looks beautiful.
3) Once Brandon figured out how, he had no trouble riding the bike.
4) Alexis doesn’t want to use that computer because it is too old.
5) The chrome is so shiny I can see my reflection in it.
6) Every time I want to use the phone, my sister is already using it.
7) When we arrived at the restaurant, my family and I had to wait a long time for a table.
8) Go get your dirty clothes out from under your bed and put them in that laundry basket.

**Lesson Four:** Prepositions and Conjunctions

**Grade/Subject:** ESL Group (Ages 10 to 14)

**Objectives:** 1) To identify and define Prepositions. 2) To identify and define Conjunctions.

**Standards:** Common Core ELA

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6, grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel); c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech; d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
Do Now: Watch “Conjunction Junction” from *School House Rock* and “Prepositions” from *School House Rock* on You Tube. Source 1: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfExXGMX2JM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfExXGMX2JM) (Prepositions); Source 2: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPeI3hd11_g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPeI3hd11_g) (Conjunction Junction)

Prior Knowledge: Students will be aware of the definitions of words classified as conjunctions and prepositions, but they may have never heard the term or know how to classify them.

Class Activity: Nava C. Pip. What does her middle initial stand for? Conjunctions! Conjunctions join words and phrases and even parts of sentences. Present students with an open phrase. Have students add another phrase to the existing sentence with a conjunction. The following examples were created by students at the Blythedale School. Similar sentences can be created by students. Have students copy these sentences in their notebooks and use highlighters to identify the conjunctions.

1. Pick up the papers, because they fell on the floor.
2. For breakfast, I ate cereal and milk with fruit.
3. I don’t know what I am doing this weekend, but I hope I am doing something fun.
4. Bogdan and Dora received an A+, but Gabriel received an A++.
5. They gave us the whole chapter of social studies and I would have to write compound sentences for each vocabulary word!
6. I like ice cream, but Elvia doesn’t.
7. I went to school because I have no choice.

Prepositions with “Preppy the Prepositional Pig”: The stuffed pig will help students understand the concept that prepositions explain location, position, or a time. Write this sentence on the Smart Board:

*Jessica was going to school, but she saw a candy shop and went there.*

Preppy will go TO school WITH Jessica and then they will see a candy shop and go there. Demonstrate with the stuffed animal as it changes positions along the sentence on the Smart Board. Have students give examples of sentences. Students can demonstrate with the stuffed pig as the teacher presents these sentences on the Smart Board. Students at Blythedale School came up with these sentences; other students may come up with similar examples. Have students copy these sentences in their notebooks and use highlighters to identify the prepositions.

1. I like to learn prepositions in class. (TO, IN)
2. I enjoy playing basketball outside of my house and in my neighbor’s yard. (OUTSIDE, OF, IN)
3. The ball is above my sneakers on the shelf. (ABOVE, ON)
4. I learned about Algebra instead of Geometry in math class. (ABOUT, INSTEAD, OF, IN)
5. I adore learning outside of school. (OUTSIDE)
6. I’m thinking of what to say. (OF, TO)
7. I love to play sports in the Village. (TO, IN)
8. I go to play video games at a friend’s house. (TO, AT)
9. I enjoy butterflies because they are nice and colorful and peaceful in the park. (AND, IN)
10. The cool hospital is right here. (RIGHT HERE)

**Assessments:** Oral Assessment during class activity as students create sentences together, and point out words with visual aids; Homework sheet.

**Homework:** Worksheet (see below).

**Materials:** 1) Students—notebook, pens/pencils, highlighters; 2) Teacher—Smart Board, Smart Board Pens, Pointer, Internet Connection for YouTube; 3) Homework sheet.

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**Lesson Five:** Interjections and Review

**Grade/Subject:** ESL Group (Ages 10 to 14)

**Objectives:** 1) To identify and define Interjections. 2) To review the 8 parts of speech. 3) To apply the 8 parts of speech to writing. 4) To match words with the appropriate part of speech.

**Standards:** Common Core ELA

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6, grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Use context (e.g., the
overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel); c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech; d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

**Do Now:** Show students some word art displaying various Interjections. Ask them to explain what they think interjections are. Then, come up with a definition as a class. Interjections are the only part of speech that we have not yet talked about. These words are the words that we use all day, each day, but generally don’t use in our writing for school. Words such as “OUCH!” and “Hey!” You can create your own word art at: [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net)

Now that we have discussed all the parts of speech, let’s review them using the help of Nava C. Pip:

N - noun
A - adjective
V - verb
A – adverb
C - conjunction
P - Pronoun
I - Interjection
P - Preposition

**Directions for students:** We considered Articles as part of the nominal phrase, so we won’t include them in the 8 parts of speech. And Interrogatives fall under pronouns most often, so we won’t include them in the 8 parts of speech. Break up into groups of four. Together, you will create a story based on one of the following prompts. Your story must use each of the parts of speech at least once and contain at least five sentences! After you write out your story, we can type them up and create a word collage on [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net). Fill out the graphic organizer with the words from your story.

Students will print the story and then print the collage to put underneath the story. Under the collage, students will place the graphic organizer of the parts of speech and categorize each of the words. They do not need to write words multiple times if they appear more than once. Put everything together on construction paper for display. Display these topics on the Smart Board as follows, as well as an example of the finished project.
Group A - The favorite board games of our group are: ___________________

Group B - The school subject that we find the hardest is: ________________

Group C - __________ music is the best kind because: ________________

Group D - A country that our group would visit if we could is: _______________

Group E - Our group thinks that _______________ is a great fictional character because_________

Assessments: Paragraph the students write as a group that include all parts of speech; Word Art; Graphic Organizer Chart of the Parts of Speech.

Homework: If they haven’t finished their group project, they can do so for homework.

Materials: Students: Notebooks, Pens/Pencils; Teacher: Smart Board, Smart Board Pens, Internet Connection, Laptops with Internet Connection and MS Word for students to work on project, Printer Paper, Construction Paper, Scissors, Glue, Graphic Organizer for Review

Example:

The country our group would visit is New Zealand. We think this country is very pretty. New Zealand is the country in which The Lord of the Rings Movies and The Hobbit were filmed. The first thing we would say when we get off the plane would be “Wow!” One of our group members, Jolie has a cousin who lives there. Hopefully we can Skype with her after school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns including articles</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Adverbs</th>
<th>Conjunctions</th>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Interjections</th>
<th>Prepositions</th>
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<tr>
<td>The country</td>
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The Gilded Age
Michael Galderisi

In this 11th grade US History unit, students will be introduced to the beginning of the United States becoming a super power. Students will become familiar with how the United States’ physical growth was reflected in its economic growth. This unit will instruct students on how this economic growth encouraged the US to help with the astounding poverty level in the country due to massive European and Asian immigration. This unit is important because it allows students to learn how the US made the transition from an isolated country before the Civil War to a burgeoning super power with great wealth, great reformers, and great cities being built from scratch. This unit will also highlight the negative aspects of the Gilded Age, such as discrimination and political corruption, and shows the transition of the US from the 19th century to the 20th century, which is often referred to as the American Century. Students will gain knowledge of how the US carved out its role on the world stage with its great captains of industry; its industries, which were fueled by the labor of the newly arrived immigrants; and the reformers who helped the immigrants fight for and achieve the social changes that helped make the US the land of the free.

Lesson One

Instructional Objectives: After one class, the students will be able to identify and interpret the role that journalists played in the Progressive Movement during the Gilded Age.

New York State Standards: Grades 11-12 Key Ideas and Details #1. Site-specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.


Materials/Technology: Video (Documentary) Footage, Smart Board, Textbooks, Laminated Photographs, Laminated Term Cards

Anticipatory Set/Motivation: The students will have a quick Do Now in which they receive a packet of Thomas Nast cartoons on the Tweed ring; the students will look at the cartoons and write their reactions underneath the cartoons.

Show the students the Boss Tweed segment of Ric Burns’ documentary, New York. The segment discusses how the cartoonist Thomas Nast took down the Boss Tweed/Tammany Ring using nothing more than cartoons in a newspaper.

Input: Present a lecture alongside a PowerPoint presentation that outlines the role journalists played in the Progressive Movement during the turn of the twentieth century. The PowerPoint will focus on the political (Nast), social (Riis), educational (Adams) and industrial (Sinclair) reforms that journalists, such as those named above, helped to usher in. The presentation will use notes along with cartoons and photographs from the era to help familiarize students with the journalists’ actions. The presentation will also include fun facts to maintain student engagement; the fun facts will show the students how these reforms put in place over a hundred years ago impact their lives and their communities in today’s age. The presentation will end with a five-minute verbal
summarization quiz where the class can answer verbal questions about the impact “muckraking” journalists had on the Gilded Age.

**Differentiation/Adaptations:** Students with strong auditory skills will learn from the lecture portion of the PowerPoint presentation; strong visual learners will learn from the film and PowerPoint visual. Kinesthetic learners will learn from the DRN and the verbal question and answer session. The PowerPoint presentation will be presented in enlarged text, and during the verbal summarization quiz, students with learning disabilities will receive laminated photo cards and laminated term cards and will have to find the match for each card; ESL students will also participate in this activity. Students with processing lags will get extra time with resource help. ESL students will receive vocabulary sheets, as well as printed copies of the PowerPoint presentation.

**Modeling:** Ask the question, “Why was the work of the muckrakers so effective in bringing about reform?” Students will then read the primary source portion of “How the Other Half Lives” by Jacob Riis; once students finish reading, the teacher will lead the discussion of class’s response, writing answers on the Smart Board.

**Check for Understanding:** Divide the class into five groups; each group will receive the same six-question handout. The class’s answer to the first question will be written on the Smart Board so the students know what is expected of them.

**Guided Practice Activity/Monitoring:** While the students are working in small groups on the questions, move from group to group and offer positive reinforcement. After 5 minutes, each group will write their answer to one of the five questions on the board. Afterward, lead the class in a discussion about those answers.

**Closure:** To close out the class, an exit ticket will be distributed to each student, where questions on the topic and how the students grasped the understanding of the topic will be asked. The exit tickets will be anonymous so the student will feel freer to answer and not be judged by the teacher.

**Independent Study:** Students will be assigned the chapter in our textbook that deals with role journalists played in the Progressive Movement, and answer the questions on that chapter, which will be handed in on the following day.

**Evaluation:** The exit tickets are one way to evaluate how well students understood the lesson. From the responses, the teacher will be able to evaluate the strength of the lesson in the short term. By collecting and grading the homework of the following class, the teacher will be able to see how strong the lesson was reinforced by the homework in the long term.

**Lesson Two**

**Instructional Objectives:** After one class, students will be able to identify and explain the roles of the major titans of industry who came to power and thrived during the Gilded Age.
New York State Standards: Grades 11-12 Key Ideas and Details #7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

NCSS Standards: 3. People Places and Environments; 5. Individuals, groups and Institutions; 6. Power, Authority, and Governance

Materials/Technology: Video (documentary) footage, laminated biography sheets, PowerPoint.

Anticipatory Set/Motivation: Begin the class by showing students clips from the History Channel mini-series, *The Men Who Built America*. The segments shown will discuss John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Jay Gould, James Fisk, J.P. Morgan, and Cornelius Vanderbilt.

Input: Continue the class with a short lecture that will utilize structured questioning techniques to activate the students’ schema on these titans. Divide the class into six groups of four students; each group will work together to create a ten-minute PowerPoint presentation on one of the aforementioned titans. Each group will be required to become an expert on one of the six titans of industry. Assign each member of the group one of the four aspects of the historical figures life to research. The four aspects are: early life, immediate impact, lasting impact, and legacy. Then, distribute a pre-written biography of each titan divided into the four sections for each student to master. The students’ will subsequently study their assigned aspect individually as homework for the next class. The groups will meet outside of class and have one week to organize their group presentation. After one week, the groups will present their PowerPoint presentation on each titan. The presentations will be followed by a quiz on each titan and their life and contribution to society.

Differentiation/Adaptations: Students with strong auditory skills will learn from the lecture and the verbal description during the PowerPoint presentations; strong visual learners will learn from the mini-series clips and PowerPoint visual. Kinesthetic learners will learn best from the structured question sessions. The PowerPoint presentation will be presented in enlarged text; students with learning disabilities will be handed laminated copies of the presentation so they can have a better understanding of what is being shown. Students with processing lags will get extra time with resource help. ESL students will receive vocabulary sheets, as well as printed copies of the PowerPoint presentation.

Modeling: Ask the question, “Why was each of these men so influential during the industrial rise of the United States?” Students should then read the biography sections they received; once students finish reading, choose one aspect of a titan and lead a class discussion, writing the answers on the Smart Board.

Check for Understanding: The class will be broken up into groups and each group will be assigned one of the six titans of industry. Each group member will be required to go home and read their section and come back the following class with a list similar to the one on the board.
**Guided Practice Activity/Monitoring:** Students will work in small groups on their assigned titans. While this is taking place, move from group to group and offer positive reinforcement. ESL students will be in groups with English language speakers and will receive additional help from ESL collaborative teachers.

**Closure:** To close the lesson, each student will receive a ten-question multiple-choice quiz covering the characteristics and industry of each titan.

**Independent Study:** Students will be required to master their assigned aspect of their titan the night before they meet with their group after class to plan their PowerPoint presentation.

**Evaluation:** Students’ answers to the quiz are one way the teacher will be able to evaluate students’ gained knowledge of the topic and evaluate the group learning project’s effectiveness.

**Lesson Three**

**Instructional Objectives:** After one class, students will be able to identify the issues surrounding city life and expansion during the Gilded Age, and demonstrate knowledge of the causes and effects of these issues.

**New York State Standards:** Grades 11-12 Key Ideas and Details #7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

**NCSS Standards:** 3. People, Places, and Environments; 10. Civic Ideals and Practices

**Materials/Technology:** Video (documentary) footage, Smart Board, Projector

**Anticipatory Set/Motivation:** Begin the class with a KWL chart focusing on the topic of city life during the Gilded Age. This will begin to activate the students’ schema. Next, show the class excerpts on the immigrant experience from Ric Burns’ documentary, *New York*.

**Input:** Focus the class’s attention on the predetermined three major issues about city life during the Gilded Age. These three issues are: crime, over-crowding, and health. Next, create a data organizational chart on the Smart Board, and lead the class in a discussion about the causes and effects that these three issues had on city life. An example of the graphic is below. A sheet with this graphic organizer will be passed out to each student so they can take notes properly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Over Crowding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Health</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differentiation/Adaptations: Students with strong auditory skills will learn from the lecture and the verbal description during the PowerPoint presentations; strong visual learners will learn from the documentary clips and PowerPoint visual. Kinesthetic learners will learn best from the graphic organizer. The PowerPoint presentation will be presented in enlarged text; students with learning disabilities will be handed laminated copies of the presentation so they can have a better understanding of what is being shown. Students with processing lags will get extra time with resource help. ESL students will receive vocabulary sheets. ESL students will receive additional help from ESL collaborative teachers.

Closure: Once the class discussion is done, based on the video clips and class discussion, assign each student a one-page written report on how these three issues have or have not affected them and their families. At the end of class, students will write an exit ticket answering the question, “What did I learn today about city life during the Gilded Age that I did not know yesterday?”

Lesson Four

Instructional Objective: After one class, students will be able to illustrate and interpret the meaning of the term “political corruption.”

New York State Standards: Grades 11-12 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas #8. Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

Grades 11-12 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas #9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies.


Materials/Technology: Video (Documentary) Footage, Primary Source handouts, PowerPoint presentation

Anticipatory Set/Motivation: Begin the class by distributing a passage from “Plunkitt of Tammany Hall” in which George Washington Plunkitt differentiates between “honest graft” and “dishonest graft.” The passage will be read aloud by students chosen at random. Next, ask the students for their thoughts on graft.

Input: After the graft discussion, show “The Bosses” chapter of Ken Burns’ documentary, The Congress, to highlight how business interests corrupted politicians by “buying” their vote. This will highlight the fact that political corruption happened on both the local and national level. Next, have a fifteen-minute PowerPoint presentation that discusses the Tweed Ring in New York and some famous corruption cases highlighted in the documentary video. The PowerPoint presentation should utilize political cartoons of the era, to show how the public and the press fought back against the political corruption of the Gilded Age. The PowerPoint presentation should highlight how cartoons were more effective then written articles, because while not everyone could read English, everyone could understand cartoons.

Differentiation/Adaptations: Students with strong auditory skills will learn from the lecture portion of the PowerPoint presentation; strong visual learners will learn from the film and PowerPoint visual. Kinesthetic
learners will learn from the verbal discussion session after the primary source reading. The PowerPoint Presentation will be presented in enlarged text; students with listening disabilities will receive a written transcript of the video presentation. ESL students will receive vocabulary sheets, as well as printed copies of the PowerPoint presentation.

**Modeling:** Distribute sheets with five different Gilded Age political cartoons on them. Divide the class into four groups. Lead the class into decoding what aspect of political corruption one of the five cartoons is focusing on. Use a spider map with the main form of corruption at the middle and the forms of corruption exposed in the cartoon as the arms. After the modeling, assign each of the four groups one of the remaining pictures and have them perform the same activity. Next, have them share their answers with the rest of the class.

**Guided Practice Activity Monitoring:** Students work in the small groups on the questions, while the instructor moves from group to group, offering positive reinforcement. After 5 minutes, each group will discuss their findings with the rest of the class.

**Closure:** To close the class, each student will write an exit ticket explaining how “political corruption” affected the US during the Gilded Age.

**Independent Study:** Students will be assigned the chapter that deals with political corruption, and answer the questions on that chapter and hand them in the following day.

**Evaluation:** The exit tickets will be one way to evaluate the lesson. From those responses, the teachers will be able to evaluate the strength of the lesson in the short term. By collecting and grading the homework in the following class, the teacher will be able to see how strong the lesson was reinforced by the homework in the long term.

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**Lesson Five**

**Instructional Objective:** After one class, students will be able to distinguish the discrimination minorities faced during the Gilded Age.

**New York State Standards:** Grades 11-12 Key Ideas and Details #1. Site-specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

**NCSS Standards:** 5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; 9. Global Connections

**Materials/Technology:** PowerPoint, worksheet

**Anticipatory Set/Motivation:** Start class using a KWL chart on the topic of discrimination in America. Students will discuss the types of historical discrimination they already know about and what they want to know more about. Next, direct the conversation to Gilded Age discrimination to focus the students’ conversation.
**Input:** Conduct 20-minute lecture focusing on minority discrimination. The PowerPoint should highlight the Women’s Suffrage movement, the Chinese Exclusion Act, Jim Crow South, and the plight of European immigrants. Next, distribute a handout consisting of questions about discrimination during the Gilded Age.

**Differentiation/Adaptations:** Students with strong auditory skills will learn from the lecture portion of the PowerPoint presentation; strong visual learners will learn from the PowerPoint visual. Kinesthetic learners will learn from the handout and the verbal question and answer session. The PowerPoint Presentation will be presented in enlarged text, and during the verbal summarization quiz, students with learning disabilities will be handed laminated photo cards of the PowerPoint presentation. ESL students will receive vocabulary sheets, as well as printed copies of the PowerPoint presentation.

**Modeling:** Guide the class through the first question on the worksheet, showing the class how to look for the answers in their textbooks.

**Guided Practice Activity Monitoring:** Students work individually on the questions, while the instructor moves around the class, offering positive reinforcement. After 10 minutes, engage the class in a discussion about their answers.

**Closure:** To close the class, an exit ticket will be distributed to each student. The exit ticket will consist of questions on the topic; the students’ responses will demonstrate the effectiveness of the lesson. The exit tickets will be anonymous, so the students will feel freer to answer and not be judged by the teacher.

**Independent Study:** Students will be asked to go home and discuss with their parents about any discrimination that their family has faced. This information will spearhead a class discussion about their findings the following day.

**Evaluation:** The exit tickets will be one way to evaluate the lesson. From those responses, the teachers will be able to evaluate the strength of the lesson in the short term.
The Civil War
Dana DiLullo

This 5th grade unit is designed for a general education US history class. It begins with a literature/vocabulary lesson. I find using literature in social studies to be particularly effective because it helps students relate to the material. Lesson #1 will be the first time many students will learn about the Civil War in depth. In this case, Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco proves to be an excellent place to begin. By reading the story aloud, and discussing as we go along, student interest in the topic should be sparked. Having the students select and define key words and phrases will help them become familiar with the language during the time period being studied. Use of a K-W-L chart is essential to this lesson. Once the basic notion of what the Civil War was about has been planted in the students’ minds, a concept lesson will take place. Children will look at “the bigger picture” in regard to what “freedom” means at the start of this lesson, and will then narrow their focus to what “freedom” meant for particular groups of people during this time period. Students will be expected to know the difference between examples and non-examples, and be able to relate the term “freedom” to various historical documents. Students will also be expected to work productively in groups and to share their findings with the class. Working with a developing idea of what the Civil War was, students will focus on key players during the next lesson. They will be familiar with certain names and will research a list of key individuals’ roles in the war. This lesson is based primarily on NCSS Standards 4 and 5. Students will work in pairs, reading the handouts given to them on their assigned individual, and preparing a poster with their findings. This allows students to use their creativity and brings art into social studies. Because students will be expected to present their poster to the class at the end of the week, they will also get practice with public speaking skills. Armed with this new information, students will be ready for the inquiry lesson, which focuses on the reasons Confederate and Union soldiers fought in the war. The lessons are becoming more focused in scope at this point. After discussing the steps of an inquiry lesson, students will come up with hypotheses and then adjust these hypotheses after they have read primary and secondary sources. The class will then construct a Venn diagram in order to visualize their findings. By Day 5, the students will have been exposed to a great amount of material on the Civil War. They will be ready to take part in a deliberation lesson that focuses on whether or not African-Americans should have fought. Students will make a case for their cause based on the readings, and deliberate this case against the opposing side. After the last lesson, students should be prepared for the unit test, which will serve as a means of formal summative assessment. They should also have grown much stronger in regard to Standards 1 and 2 of the NYS Social Studies Standards: History of the United States and Civics, Citizenship, and Government.

LITERATURE/VOCABULARY LESSON

Time: One 60-minute class period


Objectives: After reading Pink and Say by Patricia Polacco, students will be able to identify and define important words and phrases from the story that describe different aspects of the Civil War. They will be able to use these words and phrases to gain basic knowledge about the Civil War.
**Materials:** *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco, K-W-L chart for each student, easel and paper or blackboard, student notebooks, pencils, and dictionaries and/or access to the Internet.

**Interest building/Prior knowledge:** This lesson will serve as a springboard for the Civil War unit. Students are expected to have little prior knowledge of the Civil War at this point. In order to build interest about the Civil War, tell students that we are going to read a story that took place during the Civil War. Be sure to tell the students that the story is based on true events. Before reading, each student will be given a K-W-L chart. Encourage students to start to fill in the chart with what they “think they know” (K) about the Civil War. Tell students not to be afraid to write something down, even if they are unsure if it is true. This is a good starting point to see where the students are at in terms of any prior knowledge. Give them about 3-5 minutes for this. Next, have students start to fill out the “what we want to know” (W) section of the chart. Give them another 3-5 minutes for this. Students are not meant to fill out entire sections of the chart, but rather to just start thinking about the Civil War and jot down ideas. Have students put their K-W-L chart to the side for the time being and bring out their student notebooks. Have the students write “Words about the Civil War” on the top of their paper before reading. Explain to the students that as the book is read aloud, they are to create a list of words and phrases that will help them remember and describe what they are learning about the Civil War. Encourage the students to write down any words or phrases that come to their mind, not just what is found in the story. The object of this is to see what stands out to the students and to then address the material following the reading.

**Lesson Development:**

1) Introduce the book. Explain to students that *Pink & Say* by Patricia Polacco is a book about two Union soldiers who were unlikely to meet during their lifetimes. Open it and share with the students the entire picture for the front/back cover. Have the students predict: What age do you think the young men are? Are they friends? How can you tell? What do you think is happening in this picture?

2) Read the book aloud to the class. Stop briefly after each page to discuss what is happening and to give students a chance to write down any words or phrases from the story thus far. Reread any part of any page that students may need to hear again.

3) After the story has been read, ask students to contribute their feelings about the story and what stood out to them. Students may bring up such topics as injustice, slavery, and inequality. Be sure to write these ideas on the easel, but do not go into great depth on this particular day. Let students know that each topic will be discussed further during the unit.

4) Ask students to contribute any vocabulary words or phrases from the story that they are not familiar with. Write these words on the easel. The list may include words such as Union, Confederate, marauders, winderlight, vittles, musket, outfit, deserter, mustered, smote, and hemp. Phrases may include “Forty-eighth Colored,” “Ohio Twenty-fourth,” “in all my born days,” “jumped the broom,” and “near ‘nuff.”

**Summary:** Provide students with dictionaries or Internet access and have them define the words written on the easel and any others they may have written down that they want to define. Come back together as a class and have students share their definitions for each word. Write the best definition for each word on the easel. Tell the students to copy these words and their definitions onto a clean page in their notebooks. Have students write clearly and neatly, as they will be referring to this information throughout the unit, as well as for a vocabulary
quiz. Internet access may be necessary to define phrases, so be sure that all students get a turn on the computer(s). Have students return to their K-W-L charts. Ask them to fill in the “what I learned” (L) section of the paper. Place students in groups of 3 to 4, depending on seating arrangements, and have them discuss what they learned with one another. Encourage students to add to the “what I want to know” (W) section of their papers at any time.

Assessment: Check student understanding by asking questions during the read-aloud and directly after, such as “Why does Pink want to go back to the war?” and “Why do you think Say was so proud to have touched Abraham Lincoln’s hand?” Walk around the classroom during individual work to be sure that students are filling in the “L” section of their papers. During group work, make sure that students are interacting with one another and staying on task. Be available to help answer questions. Discussion will take place throughout the lesson, particularly during the read-aloud and when going over definitions for words and phrases, to check students’ understanding and to answer any questions they may have. Formal assessment will appear in the form of a vocabulary quiz during the course of the unit, as well as a review of student notebooks.

Differentiated Instruction: Allow students to work in pairs to define words and phrases. This may help some of the learners who are below level to finish the task more expediently and come up with the most appropriate definitions. Allow students to write a book review of Pink and Say for extra credit. This can be offered to students of all levels. Make other books available to students who wish to do further reading, such as If You Lived At the Time of the Civil War by Kay Moore and Diary of a Drummer Boy by Marlene Brill.


CONCEPT LESSON

Guiding Question: What is freedom?

Time: One 60-minute class period


Objectives: After breaking the concept of “freedom” down into parts, and identifying examples and non-examples, students will be able to see how this concept affected America’s history in the past with regard to the Civil War. In turn, students will be able to make connections with the concept of “freedom” and both present and potential future events.
Materials: Various historical documents (both primary and secondary sources), easel and paper, blackboard, yellow and pink colored highlighters, pencils, and student notebooks and portfolios.

Interest building/Prior knowledge: This lesson is the second in a series of lessons about the Civil War. Students will build upon existing individual information about the concept of “freedom,” as well as previously learned vocabulary words and phrases. By tapping into this already existing knowledge and then expanding upon it, students will learn how the concept of “freedom,” one they are already familiar with, can be used as the basis for one of America’s most notorious wars. Present the following question: What is “freedom”? Pair students and have them come up with a working definition. Give each group 5 minutes to come up with their definition(s). Have pairs share their definitions by coming up to the easel and writing them down. Explain to the class that these are definitions of the word “freedom,” not examples of how freedom can manifest itself. Point out that although each example is a little different from the others, the basic definition of the concept is there.

Write a heading on the board entitled “Freedom.” Start a column underneath, to the left, called EXAMPLES. Elicit concrete examples of “freedom” from the students. For instance, appropriate examples would include being let out of jail, escaping a country with a dictatorship, or even turning old enough to get a driver’s license. Start a second column to the right called NON-EXAMPLES. Ask students to try and think of instances that would NOT be examples of “freedom.” Appropriate examples might include being put into prison, being forced to do something you don’t want to do, or becoming paralyzed.

Lesson Development:

1) Give all students a printed copy of “Freedom: A History of US” webisode 6, segment 1, entitled “Americans against Americans” from http://www.pbs.org/wnet/historyofus/web06/segment1.html. Have students individually highlight in yellow the sentences in which they believe there are examples of “freedom.” Have the students raise their hands to contribute what they found. Write each “example” on the board and ask the class whether they think this is an example of “freedom.” If everyone agrees, write it in the EXAMPLES column. If everyone agrees that it is not a good example, write in the NON-EXAMPLE column.

2) Have students take a second look at the same document. Have them go through and highlight in pink the sentences in which they believe there are non-examples of “freedom.” As before, have students raise their hands to contribute what they found. Write each “non-example” on the board and ask the class whether they think what was written goes against what it means to be free. If everyone agrees, write in the NON-EXAMPLES column. If everyone agrees that it actually is an example of “freedom,” write in the EXAMPLE column.

3) Break students into four groups based on proximity to one another. Tell group 1 that they will be focusing on examples of “freedom” from the slaves’ point of view. Tell group 2 that they will be focusing on examples of “freedom” from the slave-owners’ point of view. Tell group 3 that they will be focusing on examples of “freedom” from the Northern point of view. Tell group 4 that they will be focusing on examples of “freedom” from the Southern point of view.

4) Give groups 1 & 2 the following document: “Slavery in the United States: A Brief History” from http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/slavery.html. Have them highlight the examples relevant to their theme.
5) Give groups 3 & 4 the following document: “States’ Right: The Rallying Cry of Secession” from http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/statesrights.html. Have them highlight the examples relevant to their theme.

6) At the end of these examinations, ask students to share the information they learned with the class. Each group will be prompted to tell what theme their group had and give examples of what “freedom” meant to those people. Help facilitate discussion as well as write the students’ examples on four sheets of separate paper on the easel. As examples are given, ask the class if it is a true example of “freedom.” If the class decides it is a non-example, the teacher will ask, “What changes are needed to make this an example?” For example, if someone contributes Uncle Tom’s Cabin as an example of “freedom,” the class could turn that into an example by rephrasing it to “Harriet Beecher Stowe telling people that blacks were NOT happy as slaves in the book Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” This would be an example because it led to awareness of slaves as people and thereby their right to freedom. These sheets of paper containing examples of “freedom” will be hung in the room under the title “FREEDOM: THE CIVIL WAR.”

Summary: Draw the lesson to a close by revisiting the definitions of “freedom” written on the blackboard. Ask students to re-examine this list and ask, “Is your idea of the concept of ‘freedom’ any different now that you have read about different perspectives?” If the answer is yes, have the children rework their definitions to come up with something that feels right to them. If the students decide their original definitions work well, have them explain why each definition works in regard to the new information they received. Have students write in their notebooks the definition of “freedom” that suits them the best. Tell them it does not have to be a definition from the board and it can be a combination of many definitions. Prompt students to think about things happening in the world today or potential future events that either allow them to have “freedom” or can take it away. Have students bring in a clipping of a current event that deals with “freedom” to talk about and share with the class during another social studies lesson.

Assessment: Walk around classroom during group work to be sure that students are interacting and highlighting information. Be available to help any groups that are having trouble pinpointing information. Discussion will take place throughout the lesson, in particular after the groups have completed their research to check students’ understanding and answer any questions they may have. Have students write their definition of “freedom” and the various definitions of “freedom,” as well as the examples and non-examples that were developed by the class, in their notebooks. At the end of the lesson, ask students to begin a subsection in their portfolios called “concepts.” Formal summative assessment will appear in the form of a short answer question on the test at the end of the entire unit on the Civil War. Students will define “freedom” and give examples based on the themes discussed.

Differentiated Instruction: Have the class break into eight groups rather than four groups. Have two groups work on the same theme for “freedom.” Have the two matching groups compare and contrast the information they found before delivering to the class. This will help strengthen the students’ ideas by talking about them first with other students. They will be less shy to present their findings to the entire class. Also, smaller groups may help involve children who are apt to shy away from contributing their voice and ideas during group work. It may be beneficial, if time and resources allow, for students to research their themes on the Internet before coming together to present to the class. This will give them even more information from which to draw.
examples. Make books available to students who wish to do further reading, such as *Amos Fortune, Free Man* by Elizabeth Yates, *War, Terrible War: 1855-1865: A History of US (Book 6)* by Joy Hakim, and *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine and Kadir Nelson.

**KEY PLAYERS LESSON**

**Guiding Question:** Who were the major players in the Civil War?

**Time:** One 60-minute class period

**NCSS Standards:** 4: Individual Development and Identity; 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

**New York State Social Studies Standards:** 1: History of the United States and New York; 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

**Objectives:** After researching a number of key players in the Civil War, students will be able to state who each character was and what they did that was important during the war. Students will create posters depicting a specific character assigned to them for display in the classroom.

**Materials:** Handouts on a number of key players in the Civil War, blackboard or easel with paper, highlighters, student notebooks, pencils, posterboard, the Internet, and various art materials, such as markers, scissors, and glue.

**Interest building/Prior knowledge:** A literature/vocabulary lesson and a concept lesson based on the Civil War have already taken place. Students will now have solid knowledge of the event, including its causes, sides, notable battles/turning points, and aftermath. Tell the students they will be learning about and researching important people from the Civil War. Before beginning, ask students if they can think of any key players in the war. Write down their answers on the blackboard. It is most likely that they will come up with a handful of names, such as Abraham Lincoln and Robert E. Lee. Tell the class that these are indeed important players in the Civil War and that they will be further researching them, but that there are a great number of others that they should learn about. Break students into pairs based on teacher judgment of who will work well together and who seems interested in specific characters. Assign each pair a major player in the Civil War. Tell them that they will be researching their character and that they must gather as much important information as they can. For the sake of the lesson, we will assume that there are 22 students in the classroom. More or less players can be used depending on the number of students. Tell the students to highlight important information as they read their handouts. Pairs should find a comfortable place within the classroom and read the handouts out loud to one another. Have students write at the top of a clean page in their student notebooks the name of the person they are assigned. Once they have highlighted all information, they will be expected to write these details down in their notebooks.

**Lesson Development:**
1) Assign Pair #1 Abraham Lincoln. Provide them with the following handouts:

2) Assign Pair #2 Jefferson Davis. Provide them with the following handouts:

3) Assign Pair #3 Robert E. Lee. Provide them with the following handouts:

4) Assign Pair #4 Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson. Provide them with the following handouts:

5) Assign Pair #5 Harriet Tubman. Provide them with the following handouts:

6) Assign Pair #6 Sojourner Truth. Provide them with the following handouts:

7) Assign Pair #7 George Armstrong Custer. Provide them with the following handouts:

8) Assign Pair #8 George B. McClellan. Provide them with the following handouts:

9) Assign Pair #9 Harriet Beecher Stowe. Provide them with the following handouts:

10) Assign Pair #10 Ulysses S. Grant. Provide them with the following handouts:

11) Assign Pair #11 Clara Barton. Provide them with the following handouts:

Summary: Students will work with their partners to create posters depicting information and pictures of their key characters. Tell the students they will be showing their posters and presenting their characters to the class at the end of the week. Allow students to use the Internet to print pictures of their characters and provide them with various art supplies. Encourage creativity. Students will be provided more time during subsequent class periods to work on this assignment, so they need not rush to get it done in one class period. As students present their information, write key points for each character on the easel. Have all other students write this information
down so that by the end of the presentations, all students have key information on all major characters. When all students have finished their posters and presentations, help them to hang their assignments, either in the classroom or in the hallways (with permission from the Principal).

**Assessment:** Walk around the classroom during group work to be sure that students are interacting and highlighting information. Be available to help any groups that are having trouble pinpointing information. Discussion will take place after each student pair has presented their character. Pose such questions to the entire class such as, “What was so important about this character?” or “Why do you think he/she made that decision?” This is to check student understanding and to be sure that everyone is paying attention. Formal assessment takes place in the form of each student pair’s completed poster. Key characters will also be on the final unit test.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Place any students that may need more help with a strong pair, thereby making the duo a trio. When assessing student group behavior, be sure that each member of the group is contributing and that the stronger students are allowing the weaker students to have a voice. Students can dress up as their characters and present their information by reading their highlighted material, rather than making posters. Students will be advised to not spend any money on their costumes. This option may be a little easier and a bit more fun for use in a self-contained classroom, or the like. Make biography books on each character available to each group. Examples include: *WHO Were the Key Players in the Civil War? (Student's Civil War, 150th Anniversary: 1861-1865)* by Carole Marsh; *Who Was Abraham Lincoln?* by Janet Pascal, Nancy Harrison, and John O’Brien; *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford and Kadir Nelson; and *Clara Barton: Founder of the American Red Cross (The Childhood of Famous Americans Series)* by Augusta Stevenson.

**INQUIRY LESSON**

**Guiding Question:** Did Confederate soldiers and Union soldiers fight in the Civil War for similar reasons?

**Time:** One 60-minute class period

**NCSS Standards:** 2: Time, Continuity, and Change; 4: Individual Development and Identity; 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; 10: Civic Ideals and Practice

**New York State Social Studies Standards:** 1: History of the United States and New York; 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

**Objectives:** After developing hypotheses and reviewing both primary and secondary sources, students will be able to both cite reasons why Confederate and Union soldiers fought in the Civil War and draw conclusions based on their hypotheses.

**Materials:** Various historical documents (both primary and secondary sources), highlighters, pencils, and student notebooks and portfolios.
**Interest building/Prior knowledge:** A literature/vocabulary lesson, a concept lesson based on “freedom,” and a lesson on key players of the Civil War have taken place prior to this lesson. Students will already have a solid base of knowledge about the Civil War, including its causes, sides, notable battles/turning points, and aftermath. Tell the students they will be taking part in an inquiry lesson. Go over the steps for an inquiry lesson with the class, write the steps on posterboard, and post them in the classroom (as the first poster under the section labeled “Inquiries”). The list may look like this:

1) Become familiar with the problem.
2) Develop hypotheses.
3) Gather and organize information.
4) Use the information to test each hypothesis.
5) Draw conclusion based on the information gathered.

Encourage students to refer to the board to assist them during the lesson. Present the inquiry question to the class: Did Confederate soldiers and Union soldiers fight in the Civil War for similar reasons? Start a “Hypotheses” list on the board. Ask if there might have been other reasons than the ones mentioned from the book why boys and men may have wanted to fight in the Civil War. Were the reasons different for the North (Union) than for the South (Confederate)? What may have been similar reasons? Some possibilities: sense of duty, forced to go, wanted to keep the country together, wanted to break the country apart, wanted to free slaves, wanted to keep slaves, did/did not like President Lincoln, wanted to honor their families. Write the hypotheses on the blackboard. Ask the students to write down these headings in their notebooks: Union, Confederate, and Both. Have the students write in the corresponding columns the hypotheses that they believe to be true for each. The “Both” category will be designated for shared reasons.

**Lesson Development:**

1) Begin by giving all students a copy of Union Army officer Sullivan Ballou’s letter to his wife, Sarah Ballou: [http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/war/ballou_letter.html](http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/war/ballou_letter.html). Have students individually highlight the sentences where they think Officer Ballou gives the reason(s) why he is fighting in the Civil War. Tell the students they will now look for further information in groups. Tell them to highlight the sentences that contain relevant information, just as they did with Officer Ballou’s letter.

2) Break students into three groups, based on their seating arrangements. Give group 1 the following document: “Who was the Common Soldier of America’s Civil War?” with emphasis on the section “Why They Fought”: [http://www.historynet.com/civil-war-soldiers](http://www.historynet.com/civil-war-soldiers)


At the end of these examinations, ask the students to share the information they learned with the class. Each group will be prompted to not only tell why soldiers wanted to, or felt they needed to, fight but to try their best to explain why this reason was important based on what they read. Help facilitate the discussion.

**Summary:** Draw the inquiry to a close by revisiting the hypotheses on the blackboard. Ask the students to re-examine their lists of hypotheses. Have them remove, add, and revise hypotheses in light of the information they are receiving. Write each heading on the board and have students relate which hypotheses go under which heading and why. Lead the class in construction of a Venn diagram in order to summarize the investigations. Have students write conclusions based on their hypotheses. Encourage them to build multiple causes into their conclusions. Tell the class that this process of revising conclusions ("changing our minds") in light of new data is the essence of social science and that there is often more than one answer to a question. Assist students in making a giant poster with the class findings. Post it in a section of the room labeled “Inquiries.”

**Assessment:** Walk around the classroom during group work to be sure that students are interacting and highlighting information. Be available to help any groups that are having trouble pinpointing information. Discussion will take place throughout the lesson, in particular after the groups have completed their research to check students’ understanding and answer any questions they may have. At the end of the lesson, ask students to begin a subsection in their portfolios called “inquiries.” Invite students to place their conclusions in their portfolios under this section. Formal summative assessment will appear in the form of an essay question on the test at the end of the entire unit on the Civil War.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Divide the class into partners for the research section of the lesson. Give the appropriate information to each group (based on which documents students will best be able to learn from), as well as access to computers, and have them highlight information regarding reasons why soldiers wanted to fight in the Civil War. Give ample time for this. Then, have the students return together as a class and share aloud what they have come up with. It may be easier for some students to work with partners than with a larger group. Make other books available to students who wish to do further reading, such as *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, *Bull Run* by Paul Fleischman, and *Which Way Freedom?* by Joyce Hansen. Other books can be found at: [http://bookgirl3.tripod.com/civilwar.htm](http://bookgirl3.tripod.com/civilwar.htm).

**DELIBERATION LESSON**

**Guiding Question:** Should African-Americans have fought in the Civil War?

**Time:** One 60-minute class period

**NCSS Standards:** 4: Individual Development and Identity; 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; 6: Power, Authority, and Governance; 10: Civic Ideals and Practice
**New York State Social Studies Standards:** 1: History of the United States and New York; 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

**Objectives:** After seeing the video “The Civil War and the Black Soldier,” developing ideas about whether or not, as African-Americans, they would have fought in the Civil War, and reviewing research material, students will be able to successfully deliberate a particular point of view against an opposing point of view.

**Materials:** Video “The Civil War and the Black Soldier” ([http://bcove.me/8nmh72yd](http://bcove.me/8nmh72yd)), various research materials, highlighters, pencils, and student notebooks and portfolios.

**Interest building/Prior knowledge:** A literature/vocabulary lesson based on *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco, a concept lesson based on “freedom,” a key players of the Civil War lesson, and an inquiry lesson based on why soldiers wanted to fight in the Civil War have taken place prior to this lesson. Students will already have a good body of knowledge about the Civil War, including causes, sides, reasons soldiers did or did not want to fight, notable battles/turning points, and aftermath.

Tell the students they will be taking part in a deliberation lesson. Write the definition of “deliberate” on posterboard and hang it in the classroom. The definition might look something like this: “deliberate: to think about or discuss issues and decisions carefully.” Ask the class why they think it is a good idea to deliberate. Engage the class in discussion. Ideas for deliberating might look like this: People must be able and willing to express and exchange ideas among themselves, with community leaders, and with their representatives in government. People and public officials in a democracy need skills and opportunities to engage in civil public discussion of controversial issues in order to make informed policy decisions. Deliberation requires keeping an open mind, as this skill enables people to reconsider a decision based on new information or changing circumstances. Go over the steps for a deliberation lesson with the class, write the steps on posterboard, and post them in the classroom. The list may look like this:

1) Read the material carefully.
2) Focus on the deliberation question.
3) Listen carefully to what others are saying.
4) Understand and analyze what others are saying.
5) Speak and encourage others to speak.
6) Refer to the reading to support your ideas.
7) Use relevant background knowledge, including life experiences, in a logical way.
8) Remain engaged and respectful when controversy arises.


Encourage students to refer to the board to assist them during the lesson. Present the deliberation question to the class: Should African-Americans have fought in the Civil War? Ask the class if they have any ideas about why
these soldiers should or should not have fought in the war. Write their ideas on the blackboard. Show “The Civil War and the Black Soldier.” Ask the students if they now have any new ideas. Have the students write any new ideas in their notebooks. Inform the students that they will be focusing on a particular side, assigned by the teacher, and must present their reasons to the opposing side. Divide the students into four groups: two groups for African-American soldiers fighting in the war, and two groups against African-American soldiers fighting in the war. Groups will be made by the teacher and will have as close to an even number of males and females as possible. Sides will be assigned at random. Be sure to let students know that although they may believe the opposite of what they are researching, they must make a case for the side assigned to them. Tell them to highlight the information relevant to their cause.

**Lesson Development:**


2) Give second group “Civil War Black Soldiers.” Inform them they will be deliberating the “FOR fighting” side. [http://www.civilwaracademy.com/civil-war-black-soldiers.html](http://www.civilwaracademy.com/civil-war-black-soldiers.html)


**Summary:** Have all FOR FIGHTING students sit on one side of the room and all AGAINST FIGHTING students sit on the other side of the room. Have one side speak first, present their ideas, and then have the other side speak and present their ideas. Lead the two sides in a deliberation, making sure to remind the students to follow the rules of keeping an open mind and listening to what others have to say. As each side makes their points, write their reasons on the blackboard. After deliberation, have students compare their before research ideas with their after research ideas. Bring the class back together for a discussion. Invite students to say whether or not they agreed with the position they were made to deliberate. If they did not agree with their position, ask them if it was hard to see things from another point of view. A natural discussion based on actual student opinions is encouraged. Assist the students in making a giant poster with the class findings, as was done in the previous two lessons. Post it in a section of the room labeled “Deliberations.”

**Assessment:** Walk around the classroom during group work to be sure that students are interacting and highlighting information. Be available to help any groups that are having trouble pinpointing information. During deliberation, check understanding by monitoring student response. Make sure students are accurately defending their position and not losing sight of the lesson. Be sure all students are following the rules for a
respectful deliberation. Discussion will take place throughout the lesson, particularly before research and after deliberation, to check students’ understanding and answer any questions they may have. At the end of the lesson, ask students to begin a subsection in their portfolios called “deliberations.” Invite students to place their conclusions in their portfolios under this section. Formal summative assessment will appear in the form of an essay question on the test at the end of the unit on the Civil War.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Divide the class into partners for the research section of the lesson. Give the appropriate information to each group (based on which documents students will best be able to learn from), as well as access to computers, and have them highlight information regarding African-Americans fighting in the Civil War. Give ample time for this. It may be easier for some students to work with partners than with a larger group. Make other books available to students who wish to do further reading, such as *African Americans During the Civil War (Slavery in the Americas)* by Deborah DeFord and *Black, Blue & Gray: African Americans In The Civil War* by Jim Haskins.
Becoming Democratic Citizens

Cyntia Malpartida

At a young age, children should be introduced to topics related to democracy so they can grow up to become good citizens. Teaching children the basic dimensions of citizenship education will “prepare children for a particular kind of civic partnership” (Parker, 72). Teachers are responsible for creating a democratic environment in their classroom and to teach their students in a way where they can tolerate the political and religious ideas of the rest of the student population. Teachers need to teach their students to respect other students’ traditions and to treat everybody the same way. Teachers have the moral obligation to be exemplar role models to their students. One important role that an elementary school teacher has is to make children become democratic citizens. Students need to understand that we live in a place where there are diverse cultural groups. Even though students will be likely to “identify with their own ethnic communities, religious beliefs, and family backgrounds, they will share one political identity: democratic citizen” (Parker, 72). Students need to learn that working together and helping others brings along better solutions. Incorporating the six dimensions of citizenship education (deliberation, voting, service learning and community actions, democratic knowledge, democratic values, and democratic dispositions) will help teachers “nurture citizens who can create a better world” (Parker, 71).

The following lessons will help teach students to become responsible, helping, respectful democratic citizens. The topics in these lessons are connected with each other; all of these lessons teach children how to live with others and what to do to help others. The first lesson focuses on teaching children to share toys in order to establish a welcoming environment and create friendships. In the second lesson, the children come up with ideas for a class rule and vote as a group to choose the best rule. The third lesson teaches children about community helpers and how they help others, as well as what they can do to help their communities. The fourth lesson gives the children a hands-on experience of what kind of job firefighters do. With this lesson, they get an insight of everything that is related to firefighters. The last lesson teaches children the differences that exist among people and to respect others no matter their physical characteristics.

These lessons will help children develop a strong foundation about what it means to be good democratic citizens. They will learn to be fair with others, respect other ideas and the importance of voting, the importance of community helpers and the unique jobs firefighters provide for their communities, and to live among and respect people from other backgrounds.


Lesson 1: Inquiry Lesson

Grade: Kindergarten

Time: 45 minutes

NCSS Standards: IV. Individual Development & Identity; V. Individuals, Groups, & Institutions; IX. Global Connections; X. Civic Ideals & Practices

Objectives: 1) Children will learn the importance of sharing their belongings and the consequences of not sharing. 2) They will learn 1-2 ways to share their toys.

Materials: “We Share Everything!” by Robert N. Munsch and Michael Martchenko; Pictures showing children playing together; Coloring pictures; Short video
**Interest building/Prior knowledge:** I will start the lesson by showing students something that I like. I will show them a collection of trolls. I will then explain to them how much I like these dolls. I will then proceed to allow the children to play with these toys. I will give a doll to each child, and while the children are playing with the dolls, I will tell them that even though these dolls are very special to me, I like to share them with them. I will then ask the students: “Why should we share our toys?”

**Lesson Development:** First, I will have my students meet me at the circle area. After they are sitting around me, I will start the lesson by asking them a question. Students will be encouraged to answer the question; I will write their answers on the board. I will then read them a story about sharing. The story focuses on children having trouble sharing their toys and not having friends to play with because of this. By the end of the story, the children decide that it would be a good idea to share their toys, since they want friends to play with. I will discuss with them the consequences of not sharing as well as what they gain from sharing. For example, I will explain to them that they might lose friends if they do not share. If they share, they will always have someone to play with. Next, children will work in pairs, using illustration pictures, to match events regarding playing, sharing, and taking turns.

**Summary:** Students will work in pairs by sharing a picture. I will ask them to work together and tell me “why are the children in the picture having fun?” I will go around the classroom to see if they are following instructions. Then, we will meet again in the circle area. Students will share their experiences from working in pairs. Next, we will conclude that “we should share our toys because…” I will teach them two ways of sharing by using their words to explain their needs and by taking turns.

**Assessment:** Children will be asked to bring their favorite toy to school in order to share it with their friends. By having my students bring their favorites toys to class, and actually sharing with their friends, I will be able to know if my lesson was understood.

**Differentiated Instruction:** For children with special needs, I will provide for them a short video to watch. I will then give the students some pictures to color. The pictures will be about children sharing their toys and working together. For gifted children, I will give them a computer activity. They will be presented with situations where they are to decide the outcome. For example, they will be given a story without an ending; the story will be about children playing in a school setting. The children in the story will start fighting over a toy; the gifted children will be given three scenarios of what should happen next in order to conclude the story. Students should pick the scenario where the children end up sharing the toy.

**Lesson 2: Deliberation Lesson**

**Grade:** Kindergarten

**Time:** 30 minutes

**NCSS Standards:** IV. Individual Development and Identity; V. Individual, Groups and Institutions; X. Civic Ideals and Practices
**Objectives:** 1) Students will decide on a classroom rule. 2) Students will respect other opinions and ideas.

**Materials:** Books, worksheets, crayons

**Interest Building/Prior Knowledge:** Children will gather at the circle area. I will remind them about a rule they just learned in class, a rule about sharing toys. I will explain to them that today they will be learning another classroom rule and they will be the ones giving ideas for this new rule. They will also choose which new rule to follow.

**Lesson Development:**

1) I will ask the children to share any rules they have at home that they follow when they are eating lunch or dining with their families. I will ask them: Do you speak or make some sign to let your family members know you want to participate in the conversation? Do you wait to speak? Do you say “excuse me” when you want to speak? I will write the children’s ideas down. At the end of the lesson, they will choose the rule for the circle area.

2) If the children do not have any experience waiting and signaling others that they want to join the conversation, they will be asked to come up with an idea of what should be done before speaking in the circle area when the teacher or a classmate are already speaking to the class. Children should come up with ideas, such as raising one’s hand or waiting for the teacher or classmate to finish talking first. Other ideas will be taken into consideration as well.

**Summary:** Children will be placed in groups of four supervised by teacher or teacher assistant. I will ask them to share their knowledge on a specific topic. They will have to raise their hands or give an equivalent signal in order to talk and will wait for another child to finish speaking. After working in groups, children will decide what signal they would like to use in order to let everyone know when they want to speak in the circle area. Children will explain why they would prefer a specific signal and why they think it would be good for the whole class to use. Everybody will have a turn to share their ideas and the children will respect their classmates’ ideas by staying quite while others are speaking. The signal that gets the most votes will be used for the duration of the school year.

**Assessment:** The next day, the children will gather in the circle area and I will see if they remember the new rule. I will ask the students if they remember it and still plan to use it when speaking in the circle area. I will observe if children are respectful to one another and if they wait for others to finish talking. I will then ask them to draw a picture regarding the rule they just have learned.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Children with special needs will have one-on-one conversation with the teacher or teacher assistant. If the children are not able to come up with ideas, the teacher will suggest ideas for the children and give them the opportunity to choose one choice. Gifted children will be asked to come with ideas and share them with their classmates. They will give explanations of why they chose a certain selection and perhaps try to convince some classmates to choose the same choice they had. If they like, they could create working groups and come up with an idea and explanation to share with the class.
Lesson 3: Concept Lesson

Grade: Kindergarten

Time: 45 minutes

NCSS Standards: IV. Individual Development & Identity; V. Individual, Groups & Institutions

Objectives: 1) Students will understand the meaning of community helper. 2) Students will be able to identify different types of community helpers. 3) Students will become aware of the purposes of different jobs. 4) Students will be able to describe the traits of different jobs.

Materials: Pictures of different community helpers (firefighter, police officer, mailman, teacher, construction worker, librarian, doctor); Paper; Pencil; Crayons; Markers; Computer activities

Interest building/Prior Knowledge: In order to collect prior knowledge from the children, I will show them pictures of community helpers. I will ask the children if they know someone who has the same job as the person in the picture. Also, I will ask the students to share information about their parents’ jobs. Then, I will explain to the students that they will be learning about community helpers and their jobs.

Lesson Development: I will describe a job that a person from one of the pictures performs. I will ask the children to describe what kind of job the person in the picture does. I will give the children clues to help them describe the jobs and encourage them to share their ideas. For example, I will say, “The person in this picture wears a white coat and he is holding a dog; what do you think this person does for this dog or other animals?”

Next, I will explain to the students that a community helper’s job is to provide services to people in the community. I will give examples, such as the mailman (who delivers our correspondence), the doctor (who checks us to see if we are healthy or sick), a police officer (who keeps our community safe), etc. I will explain to the students that they are also community helpers and the service they provide to their community is to help children with their education.

I will then explain the importance of the jobs that community helpers perform. I will say, “If we didn’t have firefighters, who would extinguish fires?” or “If we didn’t have construction workers, who would build our homes and buildings?”

I will then work with the children to create an alphabetic community helper poster. I will ask the students to list community helpers. If they are not able to name a community helper starting with one of the letters, I will read a book to them that gives names of other community helpers.

Summary: Children will work in pairs and talk about the jobs their parents perform. Children will discuss their information with each other. I will ask the students to draw pictures based on the information obtained from their classmates. For example, if a child was told by another child, “My dad is a veterinarian and he treats pets,” the child should draw a man helping cats and dogs. Then, I will ask the children to do a quick presentation to the class.
Assessment: Children will work on computer activities the day after the lesson. They will listen to descriptions of certain jobs and they will look at a set of pictures containing community helpers. Children will be asked to identify which picture matches the description.

Differentiated Instruction: For ELLs, information about community helpers will be given in their native language and computer activities will be also given in their language. For children with special needs, the teacher will have one-on-one interaction. Children will be provided with coloring sheets about community helpers. The teacher will ask children if they know what kind of job the person on the sheet performs. If children are unable to answer, the teacher will give them information about the community helpers. Children will share any knowledge they have about what kind of job their parents do. For gifted children, the teacher will ask them to do a drawing demonstrating the type of job their parents do and to come up with a paragraph sharing information about the job. Also, they will list different types of community helpers and describe the kinds of jobs they perform.

Lesson 4: Knowing What Firefighters Do

Grade: Kindergarten

Time: 45 minutes

NCSS Standards: IV. Individual Development & Identity; V. Individual, Groups, & Institutions; X. Civic Ideals & Practices

Objectives: 1) Students will be able to explain the work firefighters do. 2) Student will acknowledge the importance of firefighters’ job.

Materials: Worksheets, Camera, Glue, Scissors

Interest building/Prior Knowledge: I will remind the students that they have previously talked about community helpers. I will show them a picture of an important community helper: a firefighter. I will say, “I am sure you recognize the character in this picture.” I will remind the students of what they discussed the previous day. They talked about going to a fire station. Then I will say, “Today we will going to a fire station and will be obtaining information about the work firefighters do by taking pictures.”

Lesson Development: Students will meet at the circle area and I will provide cameras for them. I will explain to them that the use of cameras is to collect information from the trip to the local fire station. I will explain that the cameras should be used to takes pictures of the clothes firefighters wear, where they sleep, the fire trucks, and other things the children think are important.

Students will be paired and should work together. They will share the camera and decide what pictures to take.

Once in the firehouse, the students will go to different places and start to obtain information about the firehouse and the firefighters that work there.
After the trip, the students will print their pictures; they will use these pictures to create a story about firefighters. They will continue to work in pairs. The pictures will be glued onto the worksheet.

**Summary:** At the end of this activity, they will present their pictures to the class. They will give a small presentation explaining the meaning of their pictures. After explaining the content of their pictures, they will share what they learned about the importance of firefighters’ job. Then, they will discuss if they liked going to the firehouse and taking pictures and if they would like to go to another place where they can learn about another community helper.

**Assessment:** The next day, when students are sitting in the circle area, I will ask them to discuss one of the jobs firefighters do and to explain why this job is important to the community.

**Differentiated Instruction:** For ELLs, information about the trip and what they are supposed to do during the trip will be explained to them in their own language. They will be paired with students who speak both English and their native language. By having an ELL student working with a student who understands both languages, their knowledge about firefighters will be transmitted to the teacher and the rest of class through the student who speaks both languages. Students with disabilities will also be paired with a student without disabilities.

**Lesson 5: We Are All Human Beings**

**Grade:** Kindergarten

**Time:** 45 minutes

**NCSS Standards:** I. Culture; III. People, Places, & Environments

**Objectives:** 1) Students will understand that some differences among people are a result of their cultural background. 2) Students will able to identify differences and similarities among people, in food, clothes, homes, and families in different cultures. 3) Students will identify physical characteristics. 4) Students will learn respect for people from other cultures.

**Materials:** WHOEVER YOU ARE by Mem Fox and Leslie Staub; Worksheets containing pictures of eyes, mouths and noses; Crayons; Scissors; Glue

**Interest building/Prior Knowledge:** I will start the lesson by showing pictures of different people to students. I will ask them if these people have something in common. Next, I will explain that these people have something in common by saying, “They are all human beings and we are all the same.” Then I will say, “The color of their skin and eyes are different from each other, as well as the shapes of their noses, eyes, and mouths. But we are all human beings.” Then, I will ascertain students’ prior knowledge by asking them if they have friends that look physically different, but do the same things as them. I will give them an example: “The teacher in the next-door classroom is physically different from me, she has different color hair, eyes, and skin, but we both have something in common—we both teach children.”
**Lesson Development:** I will read WHOEVER YOU ARE to the students. This book is about children around the world. It talks about how children feel, the places they live, the languages they speak, and the way they look. The book’s main purpose is to help children understand that even though they might be different from other children, culturally and physically, they still have the same feelings and do the same things no matter where they are or how they look.

I will pair students to work on an activity after reading the book. I will give the students some worksheets containing pictures of eyes, mouths, and noses. They will be asked to color these pictures according to the colors of their eyes, mouths, and noses. After they are done coloring, they will write their names under each picture and cut the pictures. I will then ask the students to talk to their partners and come up with three things they like in common.

**Summary:** After students are done sharing information, they will come to circle area. They will hand in their pictures. Next, I will ask them questions regarding their pictures and things they learned they have in common. Each group member will answer one of two questions. One student will be asked about the differences he/she found in these pictures. The other student will be asked about the things he/she found they have in common.

**Assessment:** For homework, students will be asked to find a person who has physical characteristics that are different from them. They will be asked to take a picture of this person, if possible, or draw a picture of this person. The next day at school, they will be asked to share their pictures or drawings to the class. They will be asked to introduce the person in the picture and to tell the class how they know this person. They will also be asked if they have any things in common with this person.

**Differentiated Instruction:** ELLs will be given two worksheets with pictures. In one worksheet, they will color the eyes, mouths, and noses according to the colors of their eyes, mouths, and noses. The other worksheet will contain the same pictures, but for this worksheet, they will be asked to color the worksheets based on the appearance of a person from another culture. Then, they will draw an activity they could do with the person from the other picture.
Part Three: Articles
While the history of diverse cultures and civilizations can be used to create an inclusive classroom and possibly engage students who haven’t been motivated by previous mathematics courses, the history of mathematics should also be used to provide context to material and to enrich the understanding of concepts. I will focus on five historical ideas that can be integrated into the mathematics curriculum that would lead to a greater appreciation and understanding of the high school mathematics. These five ideas to be incorporated in teaching secondary mathematics are: visual geometrical representations of equations and calculations, number systems throughout the ages, the legacy of civilizations’ greatest concrete achievements, the endless rediscovery of math in nature, and the history of teaching mathematics through word problems.

One of the most widely remembered high school mathematics formulas is the Pythagorean Theorem.

\[ A^2 + B^2 = C^2 \]

This formula is often represented visually:
However, it is rarely shown, taught, and explained with visual geometrical representation similar to the one shown below.

While other well-known formulas, like Einstein’s $E=mc^2$, cannot be further understood by simply creating a visual representation, the geometric representation of the Pythagorean theorem needs to be taught in the context of the importance of geometry in early mathematical thinking. Geometry was so important to mathematical understanding that negative square roots and negative solutions to quadratic equations were either illogical or inconceivable. While Chinese mathematicians 2,100 years ago are the earliest to have shown an understanding of negative numbers and clearly started to visualize problems without geometry, the power of geometry to explain and teach mathematics should not be ignored. The distributive property of multiplication should be shown, taught, and explained with the help of geometric graphs or manipulatives. In algebra, the distributive property would be better understood by many students by graphically reviewing and showing $10 \times (7 + 3) = ?$ before or during an introduction of $a(b + c) = ab + ac$. Similarly, binomial expansion, which initially is often applied only to the second or third power, should be introduced to students with a historically accurate, helpful, and visually intuitive representation that can include graphing and squaring and geometry. Seeing two squares and the two rectangles is a powerful learning tool to expose students to, instead of merely teaching the short cut of $a^2+2ab+b^2$. The full opportunity to master and comprehend formulaic answers should be enhanced by not just teaching FOIL, but by incorporating the visual geometry of graphing $(5+1)(4+2)$ and $(a+b)(a+b)$. Geometry’s usefulness in teaching algebra is as great today as it was indispensable thousands of years ago, when the earliest civilizations started to understand and unlock the problem-solving potential of mathematics.

A second concept that should be incorporated into teaching many mathematics standards is to introduce students to various number systems and number representations that existed in different civilizations before the current base 10 decimal place value number system became universally accepted. For students with an interest in computer programming, explaining that base 2 and base 16 are relevant and useful in computer applications might be enough to create the mathematical curiosity needed to investigate and further comprehend the properties and beauty of number systems. But for many other students, base 2 and base 16, place value and exponents, fractions and their decimal equivalents seem to be unrelated and are never applied to general problem solving. The Mayan base 20 number system is a beautiful and simple way to engage students who also have shown an interest in history or South American cultures, while also teaching about the rules of exponents or the distributive properties of multiplication. The limitations of Egyptian numeric representations can be

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1 Suanschu Jiuzhang, *The Nine Chapters of the Mathematical Art* (c. 100 B.C.E – 50 C.E.).
incorporated into lessons that would reinforce the crucial importance of the number zero and allow students to understand number theory more completely. The legacy of the Babylonian base 60 number system presents a treasure chest of algebraic word problems that can help students gain confidence in modeling and solving equations. Problems, such as “convert two weeks and 4 days into minutes or seconds,” can allow students to realize they are mathematically capable of dealing with tough abstract concepts. Using the fact that circles are defined as having 360 degrees, fractions of each degree represented in minutes and seconds in algebra lesson plans can lead to more confidence in both algebra and geometry. Wherever possible, tying any lesson to the historic origins of number systems beyond base 10 can be helpful in nurturing the inherent curiosities of all students.

There are many great accomplishments of civilizations throughout the years that can be incorporated into motivational lesson plans. In most cases, “it is very effective and motivating when a particular gap in knowledge is subtly indicated.” Students might already have come across references to the Great Pyramids of Giza, the Roman Coliseum, and the leaning Tower of Pisa. Teachers can allow students to further appreciate these awe-inspiring structures by introducing the geometric properties inherent in their construction. The golden ratio (Phi) and Pi can be observed in the dimensions in the Great Pyramids of Giza, and these amazing irrational numbers should be used to further connect the mathematics curriculum to science, nature, and history. The angles, slopes, and forces at work in the leaning Tower of Pisa are rich in potential when trying to allow students to apply trigonometry to real world situations. The Panama Canal is both an amazing feat of design and organization that can be analyzed and investigated to augment geometry, trigonometry, and algebra lessons. While a trivial knowledge of Stonehenge is often present in high school students, few students have ever been introduced to the sophistication of our countries own ancient peoples. The North American Anasazi civilization built roads and structures perfectly aligned east-west and north-south. Exposing the geometric knowledge and sophistication that can be deduced in these accomplishments from more than a thousand years ago can strengthen the desire to master concepts in mathematics.

Why does so much math phobia and math anxiety exist in both young people and older adults? Why are so many aspects of nature and natural science considered inherently beautiful? I cannot begin to answer or quantify these questions. Nevertheless, it does seem to follow that with such an impressive overlap between pure math and science and nature, there is much room for improvement in emphasizing to students the endless applications of mathematics for exploring our world. Therefore, “when it comes to teasing out the inherent secrets of the universe, nothing visual, verbal, or aural comes close to matching the accuracy and economy, the power and elegance, and the inescapable truth of the mathematical.” It is elementary to allow students to explore the constant ratio of circumference to diameter by attempting to measure tree trunks, oranges, and classmates’ fingers. Incorporating a rediscovery of Pi into unit plans in measurement, ratios, statistical data organization, and error in measurement can reinforce the natural beauty of both math and our environment. Pascal’s triangle

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is often referenced while teaching binomial expansion, probability, and combinatorics. In addition, it also yields the Fibonacci numbers; their amazing connections to nature should be taught and brought to light. These mathematically useful number series are also found in the petals of many various varieties of daises, the spiral curve in nautilus spiral shells, the family trees of honeybees, etc. As quadratic equations are introduced to students, Galileo’s drive to measure the characteristics of the world should be incorporated in so many problems. The two formulas occasionally used are:

\[ d = 16t^2 \]

and

\[ t = \frac{d}{\sqrt{16}} \]

These formulas allow students to grasp this important step beyond linear equations. Using word problems with the gravitational constants from other celestial objects should be used so that quadratic equations might be the most engaging unit of the school year.

Lastly, I would like to argue that the importance of problem solving and word problems is not well represented in the mathematics curriculum. The National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics argued that “learning to solve problems is the principal reason for studying mathematics” (NCSM, Position Paper on Basic Mathematical Skills, 1977).\(^5\) Twenty-three years later, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics similarly concluded that “problem solving is not only a goal of learning mathematics but also a major means for doing so.”\(^6\) Nevertheless, classrooms and curriculum are still filled with students who are being taught to find buttons on graphing calculators and struggle with the choice of which formula to apply, not how can this problem be approached. The history of mathematics is filled with ancient civilizations that used word problems to express, teach, describe, and apply their mathematical knowledge. The problems solved in the Egyptian Rhind mathematical papyrus and Egyptian Moscow mathematical papyrus were exclusively word problems. While many Babylonian tablets have survived that contain computation calculation tables, Babylonian texts were collections of word problems that allow us today to analyze the preferred methods of problem solving at these times. An example of these ancient word problems where sila is a measure of capacity and sar is a measure of area reads as such: “One of two fields yields 2/3 sila per sar, the second yields ½ sila per sar. The yield of the first field was 500 sila more than that of the second; the area of the two fields were together 1800 sar. How large is each field?”\(^7\) In the ancient Chinese book, The Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art (Jiuzhang Suanshu), each chapter has nine detailed word problems resulting in an important summary of Chinese mathematical knowledge being taught and passed down through the examples of 81 word problems. The Chinese Sea Island Mathematical Manual presents its collection of mathematically important methods in a similar way. Even where mathematical solutions were being explained verbosely, as in the Sulbasutra (“to transform a square into a circle, a cord of length half the diagonal of the square is stretched to the east, a part of it lying outside the eastern side of the square…”) and Brahmasphutasiddhanta (“the accurate area of a cyclic

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\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Katz, p. 22.
**quadrilateral** is the square root of the product of the halves of the sums of the sides diminished by each side of the quadrilateral”), the teaching of mathematics throughout the ages by descriptive explanations can be compared to our current methods. The goal of mathematical fluency, mastery, and the ability to communicate concepts and ideas to others would be achieved more easily if solving relevant word problems were a major part of all practice questions, units, and courses in mathematics.
Perhaps one of the most underappreciated topics in mathematics is the presence of women mathematicians. While it has been a focus in education lately, with an increase in awareness of the underrepresentation of women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, the historical side has been comparatively ignored. Several women throughout history, such as Hypatia, Sophie Germain, Ada Lovelace, Sofia Kovalevskaya, and Emmy Noether have made important contributions to the field of mathematics.

**Hypatia** lived in Alexandria, Egypt from 355 CE-415 CE (Deakin 2013). Although she is well known for her violent death at the hands of a Christian mob, she is also the earliest female mathematician for whom there is a detailed record of her life and accomplishments. Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, a prominent mathematician, who gave her a thorough education in mathematics and philosophy (Katz 2009). Hypatia lectured at the University of Alexandria, where she attracted students from Europe, Asia, and Africa (Del Rosario 2012). She focused on a multitude of topics, including geometry, astronomy, simple mechanics, philosophy, and algebra (Del Rosario 2012). Recent detailed textual studies have shown that she is responsible for many mathematical works previously attributed to other male mathematicians, including several parts of her father’s commentary on Ptolemy’s *Almagest* and Archimedes’ *Measurement of the Circle* (Katz 2009). She also was responsible for a work on areas and volumes reworking Archimedean material, a text on isoperimetric figures related to Pappus’s *Book 5*, and commentaries on Apollonius’s *Conics* and Diophantus’s *Arithmetica* (Katz 2009).

**Sophie Germain** was born in Paris, France in 1776 CE to a wealthy family. Her interest in mathematics began when she was 13 years old, during the French Revolution. At that time, she was confined to her home and spent her days in her father’s library, where she came across the story of Archimedes’ death (Swift 1995). She continued her study in mathematics by self-teaching herself with the books in that library, despite her parent’s efforts to discourage her. Like most others in 19th century France, they thought that her interest in mathematics was inappropriate for a middle-class woman (Swift 1995). Under the pseudonym M. LeBlanc, Germain sent her mathematical works to prominent mathematicians, such as Joseph Lagrange (who upon actually meeting her became her mentor) and Carl Friedrich Gauss, who was impressed by her work in number theory (Swift 1995). One of Germain’s greatest achievements was to be the first woman to win a prize from the French Academy of Sciences for work on a theory of elasticity, despite her lack of formal education and access to resources that male mathematicians had (Zielinski 2011). Germain is also known for her proof of Fermat’s Last Theorem, which was used as a foundation for further work on the subject and was studied until the twentieth century, even though it was unsuccessful (Zielinski 2011). After a lifetime of combating social prejudices to become a celebrated mathematician, Sophie Germain died of breast cancer in 1831 at the age of 55.

**Ada Lovelace**, born Augusta Ada Byron, lived from 1815-1852 CE in England. After her father left her family shortly after she was born, her mother raised her. It was her mother who encouraged her to study mathematics. She was given far more education than usual for girls of her time (Katz 2009). As an adult, she began to correspond with inventor and mathematician Charles Babbage, who asked her to translate an Italian mathematician’s memoir analyzing his analytical engine, a machine that performed simple mathematical calculations that is considered one of the first computers (Zielinski 2011). Lovelace, however, went beyond just
a translation, and wrote her own notes about the machine and included a method for calculating a sequence of Bernoulli numbers (Zielinski 2011). This method is known as the world’s first computer program, and made Lovelace the world’s first computer programmer.

**Sofia Kovalevskaya** was born in Russia in 1850. Her interest in mathematics originated from her father’s calculus notes, which were used as her nursery’s wallpaper (Katz 2009). Her father encouraged her to study mathematics, but when Russian universities refused to admit a woman and her parents refused to let her leave for European universities, she contracted a “marriage of convenience” with Vladimir Kovalevsky, an aspiring scientist, so that she could move abroad and attend school in Germany (Katz 2009). Kovalevskaya eventually received a doctorate degree for her work on partial differential equations, and after her husband died in 1883, she threw herself further into her work. As a single mother, she found employment as a tenured professor at the University of Stockholm, a first for a woman in modern times. While at Stockholm, she was appointed editor for a mathematics journal, published several papers, and was appointed Chair of Mathematics (Wilson 1995). Kovalevskaya fell ill from pneumonia in 1891, and passed away shortly thereafter. She left behind several important mathematical works, including work on partial differential equations, Abelian integrals, Saturn’s rings, and the rotation of a solid body around a fixed point. Her findings won her the Prix Bourdin Prize from the French Academy of Sciences (Zielinski 2011).

**Emmy Noether** was born in 1882 in Germany to a Jewish family. Although her father and brother were both mathematicians, Noether was not interested in mathematics until she was 18, having previously studied French and English (Taylor 1995). She began her studies at the University of Erlangen, where she completed her doctorate degree in mathematics with a dissertation on invariants of ternary biquadratic forms in 1908 (Katz 2009). She remained at the university until 1915, when she was contacted by David Hilbert at Göttingen to work on his study of general relativity (Katz 2009). She remained there, and was given a teaching position and a small salary, until Hitler and the Nazis came to power and forced her out of the university and her country for being a Jew in 1933 (Taylor 1995). Noether then moved to the United States, where she taught at the all-women Bryn Mawr College until her unexpected death in 1935 after a seemingly successful surgery for the removal of a tumor (Katz 2009). Noether made several contributions to mathematics and science, including work on abstract algebra and general relativity. Upon her death in 1935, Albert Einstein wrote a letter to the *New York Times* lauding Emmy Noether as “the most significant creative mathematical genius thus far produced since the higher education of women began” (Zielinski 2011).

Every one of these women made a significant impact on mathematics, and there are several more not listed here. Current programs to encourage women to join mathematics fields include summer camps and programs, hands-on programs, and various forms of advertising, but adding a historical component is important too. While gender equality has greatly improved since World War II, many of these women were able to defy their culture’s ideals and pursue their interest in mathematics long before it was acceptable (List 2013). It’s incredible hearing how far these women came, and how they changed the opinions of the people around them to further the field of education and equality for women. These women of the past helped to pave the way for today’s women, and that can help entice today’s women to take advantage of the opportunities they are presented with and make further changes for the better. Hearing these stories can empower contemporary female students, and encourage them to follow their own interests in math and science despite being a minority
in these fields. As of 2009, only 24 percent of STEM jobs were filled by women (Thomas 2013); more needs to be done to increase those numbers.

Involving the history of female mathematicians in a secondary mathematics curriculum would not only be beneficial to the females in the classroom; it is important for all to see the contributions that these women made. These women were also very diverse, and came from all walks of life that other students can relate to. These women came from both poor and rich backgrounds, with and without family support for their choices, with large families and single mothers, and with religious and cultural persecution. Telling stories of overcoming great odds is very motivating to students, who may feel that they themselves are struggling.

The history of female mathematicians can be included in the curriculum in several ways. Several male mathematicians are already being introduced in mathematics courses for their contributions, such as Pythagoras, Archimedes, and Euclid. These women can be included in the same way. When new topics are introduced, these women and their contributions to the topic should be highlighted. Anecdotes are an excellent way to introduce a human element into an otherwise rigid subject, and they can provide motivation for solving classic problems.

Biographies can also be used in the classroom as posters, with summaries of contributions. Timelines are also a good way to summarize information and give students an overview of how far people have come in mathematics with the help of women. To encourage students to read them, extra credit can be awarded to students who can answer questions about the mathematicians in extra quiz or test problems. Even if this information cannot be included in a standard lesson, having it as an extra credit opportunity is better than not presenting it at all.

Presenting women in mathematics can be a thought-provoking motivation technique, and a beneficial addition to a secondary mathematics curriculum. By reciting anecdotes, putting up posters, and making biographies available, students can become involved in the history of mathematics and motivated to learn the mathematics involved. These stories of diverse women can be empowering for students who need extra help in mathematics.

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One of the challenges of teaching a secondary mathematics course is piquing students’ interest in course content, as well as helping them to realize the significance of it. Many students have no personal frame of reference for many mathematical concepts and therefore have difficulty developing or maintaining an interest in math. According to a 2010 article by Nick Haverhals and Matt Roscoe on using the history of mathematics as a pedagogical tool, students can experience “increased motivation and decreased intimidation—through the realization that the mathematics is a human creation and that its creators struggled as they do.” I have learned that one way to alleviate this challenge is to incorporate historical themes into the secondary mathematics curriculum. By tying history into math, students will receive a more dynamic learning experience because they will begin to understand the origins of many of the concepts that they are being taught. Exposing them to historical information also provides the students with a broader perspective of how numerous cultures and ethnicities have contributed to the development of modern mathematics.

One historical math concept that many secondary students would benefit from learning is the history and origins of pi. Applications of pi are a key component of geometry lessons from eighth grade through high school. Students learn its approximate value and when to utilize it; however, many students are unaware of the various contributions made by different cultures that aided in its development. Some schools celebrate “Pi Day,” but many do not provide a historical perspective of the value of the number. In his book A History of Pi, Peter Beckman discusses many of the transformations that pi has undergone throughout the ages, and the different cultures that have helped to bring about those transformations. Through the use of a timeline, he highlights some of the key events in the life of pi, and the cultural groups that were involved. Some of these cultures include the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, the Chinese, Greeks, and Indians, to name a few. If students were exposed to the diverse history of pi, they may develop a respect for its use in the classroom today. It may even be more beneficial for them to research a particular group’s contribution and share their historical findings with the class.

Another method of incorporating history into the secondary math classroom would be to provide students with a background of methods used to solve quadratic equations. One interesting historical aspect of this topic is the contribution of Muhammed ibn Musa Al-Khwarizmi to the completing the square method of solving quadratic equations. Students might be intrigued to learn that the quadratic equations that they solve in class today were originally solved by Al-Khwarizmi using a more literal geometric representation of the concept. In a 2013 article on Al-Khwarizmi, Barnabas Hughes notes that “while he did not use the word equation, the quadratic equation is correctly named: it focuses on the dimensions of a square.” Al-Khwarizmi included his work on quadratics in his text about basic algebra. The Arabic word al-jabr from the title of his text has helped to develop the word “algebra” that we are familiar with today. Students may benefit from learning about Al-Khwarizmi’s completing the square method from a hands-on perspective. It will help them understand some of the concrete logic that was utilized in order to develop the abstract concept that they are being taught.

One other aspect of history that can be utilized in the secondary math curriculum is Thales’ contribution to the development of the “angle-side-angle theorem” of triangle congruence. As a component of a high school geometry curriculum, students could learn about the various theorems utilized in order to determine if two
triangles are congruent. The ASA theorem is one that they will apply to numerous congruence problems; however, it is usually employed on an abstract level. Thales actually made use of the theorem to measure the distance to a ship at sea. By incorporating Thales’ work into a congruence lesson, students will not only receive a historical perspective of congruence, they can actually see how it was applied to real-world situations of the time. As part of the lesson, students can even attempt to solve the problem that Thales created to determine the distance between land and ships at sea. Again, students may be able to develop a new appreciation of the mathematics concepts that they are taught, thereby enhancing their knowledge and comprehension.

Exploring various number systems is another method of including history in secondary math. Throughout the course of history, many cultures across the globe have had their own number systems. These systems predate the current systems that students are familiar with, but they have also helped to shape and develop modern numbers. Some of the first groups to develop an organized number system include the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians. Along with number systems for computation, the Babylonians even created their own multiplication table. Similar to the diversity of the cultural contributions to pi, many ancient civilizations from countries such as China, India, and Greece all had a number system. Students may benefit from establishing parallels between these ancient systems and the modern number systems utilized today. Studying these similarities may help students realize that modern mathematics was created through the collective efforts of many diverse peoples.

One final method of merging history and secondary math is to expose students to the mathematical contributions of African Americans. According to a 2009 report compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics, white students tend to score higher on mathematics assessments than black students. The achievement gap that exists between white students and black students is an issue that the US has been facing for many years. While the gap has narrowed over the past few decades, the disparity still exists. One method of inspiring black students’ performance in math is exposing them to the contributions of African American mathematicians, as well as mathematical contributions of the African diaspora. One mathematician that can be utilized in the secondary math classroom is Benjamin Banneker. Many people are aware of Banneker’s invention of the first working clock in America, but few are aware of his strong mathematical background. It was Banneker’s knowledge of math that helped him create his clock, as well as performing the intricate calculations that allowed him to become the first African American to publish an almanac. He was so highly regarded for his aptitude in math and science that he was appointed by George Washington to aid in the planning of Washington, DC. Exposing students to black mathematicians may inspire students to develop and expand their own interest in math. This, in turn, can lead to better academic performance and an enriched learning experience for all students.

A seasoned teacher once told me that students will not develop an interest in any subject that they are taught if they do not see or feel a connection between themselves and the material. This is an idea that has stayed at the forefront of my mind. I can recall being a high school student and feeling no personal connection to math. However, I may have felt differently if I was taught about the human aspect of math. It is important that students realize that all of the mathematical concepts, rules, theorems, and methods that they are currently learning were all developed from the work of various people from around the globe. By teaching history as a component of secondary mathematics, students will get to experience math from a more humanized perspective.
They may establish that missing connection with math if they can relate to it. History will allow students to learn that mathematics is not just part of their school curriculum; it is also a piece of their cultural heritage. Overall, history can create a truly multifaceted, yet effective, secondary mathematics curriculum.
Part Four: Media and Museum Reviews
Mary Pope Osborne’s *Night of the Ninjas* is an excellent entry to her Magic Tree House anthology. The books in the series are about two children: eight-year-old Jack and his seven-year-old sister, Annie. Jack and Annie are fictional characters who live in Frog Creek, Pennsylvania. They find a magic tree house in the woods filled with books, which were also magic and all they have to do is point to a picture in the book in and it will transport them to that time and place. The tree house belongs to a woman named Morgan le Fay, who is a magical librarian from the times of King Arthur. This book is number 5 in the series.

The book opens with the two children Jack and Annie looking for the magic tree house in the woods. Jack and Annie find the magic tree house in the woods. When Jack and Annie enter the tree house they find books scattered everywhere and Morgan le Fay is nowhere to be seen, so they are concerned for her whereabouts. They find a note written by Morgan that says, “Help me—Under a spell Find 4 thi…” the n is cut off and they assume she meant to write things. The only open book in the tree house is a book on ninjas so Annie tells Jack this must be the way to find the 4 things. Jack wants to read through the book first, but Annie says it is too urgent and they must find Morgan, so they head into the book.

The wind blows and when Jack and Annie look out the tree house window there are the two ninjas from the book outside. There is also a description of the mountainside in Japan. The ninjas are wearing all black and their faces are mostly covered except for their eyes and swords strapped to their backs. Jack reads a few pages of the book to see if he can find information on ninjas. He reads a passage and writes down in his notebook, “Ninjas were warriors in old Japan.” The ninjas see Jack and Annie and scale the tree with spikes they have wrapped around their hands. They enter the tree house and motion for Annie and Jack to come with them. Jack and Annie also have a mouse that they have brought with them named Peanut. Jack, Annie, and Peanut (who is in Annie’s pocket) take off behind the ninjas. They come to a stream and the water is too cold for Jack and Annie so the ninjas carry them on their backs across the stream. Jack and Annie note that the ninjas move through the very cold stream very calmly. In fact, so calmly the ninjas are compared to two sailing ships (moving through the water). The ninjas move silently up the rocky mountain with Jack, Annie, and Peanut noisily following behind them. The ninjas freeze when they hear voices and see torches in the distance. The ninjas then begin moving faster away from the torches and voices. Jack and Annie wonder who was carrying the torches, but quickly forget. They come to a pine forest and the ninjas motion for Jack and Annie to wait, and then seemingly disappear into thin air. Jack refers to the book once again and reads another passage on ninjas which says that, ninjas often met, “in hidden mountain caves to plan secret missions” (pg. 31). Jack then writes down, “meetings in hidden caves” (pg. 31). Jack then reads another passage that states that: “Ninjas took orders from a ninja master. The master was a mysterious wise person who knew many secrets of nature.” (pg. 31). The ninjas then return and motion for Annie and Jack to follow them into the cave.
In the cave Jack and Annie meet the ninja master who sits on a mat on the floor of the cave. They discover one of the two ninjas is a woman. The ninja master tells them they must remember three things: “Use nature. Be nature. Follow nature.” (pg. 38). The ninja master then tells Jack and Annie they must return to their tree house in the east and beware of the samurai. The ninjas walk Jack and Annie outside and point them toward the woods and then disappear. Jack and Annie figure out which was is east by sticking a stick into the ground and seeing where the sticks shadow points (east) and head that way. By doing this, Jack and Annie are using nature, just as the master said. Jack and Annie then run into the samurai again. The samurai almost find them, but they pretend to be rocks and the samurai walk away. By pretending to be rocks, they are being nature. When Jack and Annie come to the stream again, Peanut runs away and they follow her to a stick bridge and cross the stream. By following Peanut, they were following nature. Just as they see the tree house the samurai are behind them once again. Jack and Annie scramble up the ladder, and find Peanut and the ninja master waiting for them in the tree house. The ninja master gives Jack a moonstone that he says will help them find their friend Morgan. They return to Pennsylvania and then head back to their home.

This book is engaging and a fun way for the students to get a feel for ancient Japan. It doesn’t go into too much detail but is a fun story that gives them an idea of what Japan looks like (mountains, cherry blossom trees, etc.). It also gives the students an idea about ninjas and samurai. Educators can use this book as a good segue into a unit on Japan.

This book would show students culture and cultural diversity. The ninjas are described throughout the book as stealthy and quiet. They are calm and barely make any noise and disappear into seemingly thin air. Whereas, the two children are described as making a lot of noise when they walk and they talk a lot. The ninjas value silence and must be quiet to complete their missions. The two children value asking a lot of questions and do not consider how much noise they are making when going from place to place. While ninjas lived long ago and not much is known about them, Japanese culture still values some of these things. If you look at footage from the Tsunami recovery the Japanese people waited quietly in line for water, food, etc. If you look at footage from any Western countries recovery from a natural disaster you will not see the same thing. Eastern cultures are known for their emphasis on the group as opposed to the individual, whereas western cultures are known for more emphasis on the individual as opposed to the group. The book can also help the students learn global connections. The content the students would learn from this book would be descriptions of Japan’s mountainous regions, ninjas, and samurai.

Some strategies educators could use to teach this book would be graphic organizers, PowerPoint, and vocabulary words. Educators could give students graphic organizers to keep track of who is in the story, and what happens in the story. They could also use a PowerPoint presentation to elaborate on certain points in the story, such as going over in more detail about who ninjas and samurai were. Also educators could show the students various pictures of both. Through inquiry the students would decide if they want to be a ninja or a samurai and would write a paragraph for homework on why they think they would want to be one over the other. Educators could also pick out various words from the book to define and use as vocabulary words.
Carmen L. Garza’s *Family Pictures*
Reviewed by Tenay Alston

The cleverly entitled *Family Pictures* is a children’s non-fiction book that sheds light on society’s cultural barriers. Author Carmen Loma Garza invites her readers to explore certain aspects of her childhood as she describes her experiences both in print and visually. In the book, Garza describes life growing up in Kingsville, Texas through her paintings; she painted her family pictures on each page in this bilingual book.

Garza begins her adventures by retelling a story where she attended a fair in Reynosa. She vividly describes the sights, sounds, and emotions she recalls from this trip. In her painting, she strongly conveys her culture’s customs and traditions. She then invites the reader to travel to her grandparents’ house, where she recounts the way her brother and she used to collect oranges in the backyard. Through both text and painting, she conveys the importance of families and the ways in which they help each member. She continues her adventures by describing her family’s tradition of eating chicken soup on Sundays. She tells of the way in which her family prepares the meal and accurately paints this image. As she continues with her family pictures, the author describes her birthday traditions of a party equipped with a piñata. Garza then describes a community tradition of raising money to send Mexican Americans to the University. Participants would pay $.25 to stand on a square in a large circle. Music would be played, and once it stopped, one had to land in the winning square to receive a prize. The funds were used to support the students. The author then continues retelling other family traditions, such as picking Nopales as a family and the roles each person played in preparing them as a meal. She describes a family vacation, seeing a hammerhead shark, and helping to make her ethnic dish of tamales. She also tells of a Mexican belief in a *curandera*, which is a healer in the community. Lastly, Garza describes her religious customs of Las Posadas and the Virgin of San Juan.

I think the author chose each of these specific adventures for a reason. Each segment of the book touches upon some important aspects of life: traditions, customs, family, faith and beliefs, and culture. Each of these aspects represents the reasons that many of us teach social studies and guide us in how social studies can be taught. I truly enjoyed the way she invited the reader into her family’s cultural traditions and beliefs, but made it understandable for students in elementary school. An excellent feature of this book is that it is bilingual (it has Spanish translations underneath the English text). I also believe it is highly important for students to hear literature from authors of various cultural backgrounds and to promote cultural diversity within our classrooms.

The book can help educators teach certain social studies skills and content, especially in connection with teaching acceptance of other cultures. It also helps teach that everyone is unique and may have different ways of living. It will help support any lesson on diversity, as students can contribute to discussions on their personal traditions or customs. Garza’s story can also help support a geography lesson on examining why humans have migrated from one place to another and the effects of cultural diffusion. It also touches upon the subjects of communities and ways of life, family and social structures, and bilingual education. I think this book is especially useful for English language learners in the classroom because they would be able to read the story in their native language (if they are Spanish speakers), which may help strengthen their participation and confidence in a group discussion about the story.
Some strategies educators could use for teaching this book include launching students’ interests in researching about their own cultural traditions and family customs. I think it is important for students to understand their culture and appreciate the things that make them special. The class could work on projects similar to Garza’s story: students could create a book that describes some important aspects of their childhood and cultural traditions. Students could also exercise their artistic abilities by illustrating their story in the manner in which they choose. Educators could further extend this lesson by inviting parents to come share with the class pieces of their cultural traditions, perhaps through food, traditional dress, or a reading. In a geography or history lesson, the class could analyze the pictures to describe characteristics of this story, such as the climate, the types of foods grown, the dress, and the traditions that are described in the picture. This would promote inquiry lessons and challenge the students to think about why Garza’s family moved to this area, as well as why the author painted the pictures in the manner in which she did.

**Mem Fox’s *Whoever You Are***
*Reviewed by Cyntia Malpartida*

*Whoever You Are*, written by Mem Fox and illustrated by Leslie Staub, is about children around the world. It describes how children feel, the places they live, the languages they speak, and, most importantly, the way they look. The book’s main purpose is to make children understand that even though they might be different from other children—culturally or physically—they still have the same feelings and do the same things no matter where they are or how they look. It explains that children around the world feel happy and sad, no matter where they are. Children all do the same things: eat, play, learn, and sleep.

This book has meaningful content and great illustrations. Its most important aspect is the way in which it is written, the way in which it appears to “talk” to the child, as if the author created this book thinking of incorporating the reader into its content. The illustrations give children a clear idea of what the book is about. If children have trouble understanding the book—either while reading alone or listening to it read aloud—the illustrations will ease their troubles and guide them through the book. The book teaches children about other children living in different parts of the world. The illustrations give children an idea of how other children in the world might look, and how the places where they live look. This book tries to create a bond between the reader/child and other children in the world by comparing and contrasting different aspects of the lives of children and emotions.

The book lends itself to the social studies curriculum by helping to teach that certain differences among people are the result of distinct cultural backgrounds, and explaining how to recognize differences and similarities among people, whether in food, clothes, homes, or families. The book helps teach content aligned to NCSS standards, especially standard 1, which focuses on culture.

I would use this book to teach students to compare and contrast our physical characteristics, such as eyes, hair, and other parts of our face. I would tell them that we all have eyes, and the color of our eyes might have a different color or shape, but in the end we are all the same. I will ask my students to share their experiences
about places where they have traveled. I would ask them to remember anything that caught their attention in the places they saw. Also, I would ask for them to compare and contrast the environments of these places with where they live now. I would tell them that when I moved to New York, I thought about how different New York was from Lima, Peru. The vegetation from New York was very different from that in Lima, since Lima doesn’t have many trees or plants. Also, the weather, language, food, and houses are very different from Lima. By sharing these examples, I would pique the children’s interest in the book and maybe they would understand it better. Also, they might be encouraged to share their thoughts with the class after listening to my example.

**Betsy Maestro’s *Coming to America***
Reviewed by Jessica Barcos

*Coming to America* is a compelling story that serves as an introduction to the very beginnings of immigration in the United States. The child-friendly book contains beautifully composed watercolor pictures that illustrate visually what occurred from the Ice Age to the present day. *Coming to America* can be used as a guide to educate students on how each group of people came to America and the impact they made on the nation. The book is an ideal source of information for grades 1-4. The author, Betsy Maestro, offers readers a perspective on heritages that emphasizes elements that are common to most people in the United States. Early readers can learn how to adopt acceptance and respect for all individuals through Maestro’s word choices and Susannah Ryan’s vivid illustrations. A diverse range of emotions, such as wonder, fright, sadness, astonishment, and happiness are portrayed through the illustrations and can increase the curiosity of children. There are illustrations of men, women, children, and settlers of all nationalities. Diversity, change, dedication, and new beginnings are all key components depicted throughout the book.

*Coming to America* provides a brief overview of the first settlers in the Americas, how it was discovered, the movement of immigrants, and how the United States became what it is today. The book describes the journey of the first settlers to discover America as they crossed the ice that connected Asia to Alaska. Christopher Columbus later “discovered” America, but there were already millions of inhabitants throughout. The Native Americas were pushed out, even killed, by European immigrants so the latter could settle the land for themselves. Not all immigrants, however, had the same dark history. Many immigrants came to the United States to escape the troubles of their own country; they saw America as a Land of Opportunity. For many, the long journeys across the Atlantic Ocean proved well worth it. When immigrants arrived by the thousands, Congress passed new immigration laws, some of which included medical examinations and background checks. On January 1, 1892, Ellis Island, in New York City, opened as the central point of entrance for immigrants. In 1921, the government passed laws limiting the number of immigrants who could enter the country. In 1954, Ellis Island closed due to new technology and processes.

The book serves as a stepping stone in opening the eyes of young children. During my student teaching experience in a fourth grade class, I came across *Coming to America* and asked my cooperating teacher about the book. She told me that she prepared lessons based from the book and described the book’s purpose in exploring how immigration began. The insights she gave to me made me curious, so I decided to explore the
book and determine ways in which I could use it in a classroom of my own. As I read the book for the first time, I thought about my own family members who came to America years ago. Reading the book made me realize that immigrants should be treated with nothing but respect because they have come a long way. I believe that this book is perfect for a third grade class because it will guide them to understand diverse cultures and how for many, the United States is considered the “Land of Opportunity” and a “melting pot.” The book takes the reader through a journey and children would have a strong interest in its word choices, along with some of the adventures that take place throughout the book.

The social studies content covered in *Coming to America* embraces many of the National Council for the Social Studies’ standards, such as I. Culture; III. People, Places and Environments; V. Individual, Groups and Institutions; and IX. Global Connections. The idea of one’s identity, explorations of cultures, struggles of individuals, and the development and establishment of America are areas in which lessons could be based upon. Developing a lesson plan based on this book could incorporate other academic subjects, such as English language arts. If I were to plan a lesson on this book, I would read it aloud to the class and have them make a story map of the events that take place throughout the book. A sequence and timeline journey can be enjoyable activities for children learning about immigration. I would also have them explore a particular group of people and how they came to America. I would even have them ask their parents/guardians on the history of their family and have them present evidence from their family history. Family trees would also fall perfectly into a lesson of this kind.

Betsy Maestro and Susannah Ryan take the reader through a journey that examines American civilization from its beginnings to the present day. I believe children would truly enjoy this book, which promotes the idea of unity. Children need to understand that not everyone is the same, and many carry on cultural traditions and practices passed on from one generation to the next. The book contains a vast amount of social content and can be used in various social studies unit plans. *Coming to America* truly touched me in more ways than one, and even had me reminiscing about when I learned about immigration in school. I will use this book in my future teaching and encourage everyone to read it!

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**Judith Caseley’s *On the Town: A Community Adventure***
Reviewed by **Maria Bottarini**

*On the Town: A Community Adventure*, by Judith Caseley, is about a young boy named Charlie who receives a homework assignment from his teacher. As part of their unit on community, Charlie’s teacher gives him and all of his classmates a notebook, as well as an assignment to explore their community and record what they find. Charlie and his mom walk around their neighborhood, and Charlie writes and draws pictures of everything he finds that make up his community.

This book is excellent for educators for several reasons. It can be used as part of any community unit from grades 1 to 3. The book is illustrated beautifully, with visual interpretations and text on every page. The students in the class would be able to relate to the main character, Charlie, since he is approximately their age.
and he is also learning about his community. The students can enjoy the adventure and have a connection to the places and people that Charlie finds throughout his journey.

The book could be particularly useful as part of a third grade unit on community workers, as well as different types of communities. It can be connected to NCSS standards 3, 5, 6, and 7, all of which relate to people, institutions, governance, and consumption. Using this book, you can teach students about different occupations and how they are tied together to form a community. Everyone that Charlie encounters works together to provide goods and services to those around them. Community can be taught first through a concept lesson in which the teacher and students come up with a working definition of what a community worker is, what they do, and how they contribute to the community. This activity would occur prior to reading the book.

The book would be part of the concept lesson as a read aloud. As the teacher reads the book, she can ask the students to predict what Charlie might find next. Students will be involved in the reading, as the teacher hides the words and asks them to look at the pictures to guess who Charlie will draw in his notebook next, and how they are connected to the community. She would ask them what their role is in the community, and how they help to make a community run smoothly. Throughout the book, the teacher will ask students to predict what comes next, and ask how each person and their occupation is connected to the community.

After the book is finished, an inquiry lesson could follow. Since the book explains how a community works and includes all those involved in making a community, the teacher could ask students if they know of any other types of communities. Students could come up with various responses. If a student has not already said “school,” the teacher should point out that their school is a community as well. She could ask the students why a school is a community, and then take the students on a tour of the school. Each student could be given a notebook, like Charlie’s, and they could write and draw everyone they see throughout the school that makes up their school community. The teacher should ask the students how each person they encounter is important to making the school run smoothly, and will help them find the answer when they are not sure. Each day of the unit, the teacher could also have a guest speaker from the community come in and explain what they do in the community. Students should have an opportunity to ask the speaker questions, as well as to respond to questions from the speaker.

As a culminating project, the teacher could ask students to conduct an interview with someone from the community. Students could be asked to find someone that works in the community, someone that may have the same occupation as a guest speaker, or someone that the students remember that Charlie encountered within the book. The students should have a list of questions that they will need to ask the person. Finally, the students could then present their findings from the interview to the class.
Cheri J. Meiners’ *Know and Follow the Rules*
Reviewed by Michelle Bohnenberger

The book, *Know and Follow Rules*, by Cheri J. Meiners, teaches children why it is important to follow rules. Throughout the book, it highlights scenarios where students show and tell how they follow rules and are being praised for doing so, rather than illustrating the consequence that comes if the rules are not followed. The book addresses ways to support children in a learning environment by keeping them socially, physically, and mentally comfortable in their environment. In the book, it doesn’t necessarily discuss specific rules children should follow; however, there are four objectives it speaks to. The objectives are: being ready to learn, how to get along and show respect, how to be fair, and how to stay safe. The book shows ways students can be responsible, as well as follow rules within each objective.

This book would prove to be a great resource, and it connects well with units focusing on rules and responsibilities. The book is an especially good way to introduce and illustrate rules for students. At the end of the book, there are lists of questions that can be asked to assess students’ comprehension of the book. Lastly, another aspect of the book I really like is how there are activities in the back to help reinforce lesson on rules.

A skill is something that students will be able to do as a result of being taught. Although this book is about teaching why students should follow rules (and the title tells you it is about rules), in actuality, reading the book teaches students that following rules contributes to their development as respectful and responsible citizens. This book can teach children ways to be a good citizen. It can be used as a springboard to teach the concept of good citizenship, as well as to teach students a lesson strictly on rules and what happens when they follow them. The NCSS standards that this book could help address are: 3. People, Places, and Environments; 5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; and 10. Civic Ideals and Practices.

When teaching this book, the definition of rules, responsibility, and respect would be introduced and added to our social studies word wall for future references. The word wall should be located in the classroom, with social studies terms defined as we go along and explore different units. Each word should have a picture associated with the definition of it. After new vocabulary is explored, I will pose the question, “why should we follow rules?” Students would participate in a shared discussion. Next, students should write or draw their final reason for the question. We will then participate in a shared reading of the book and follow up with a discussion about why we should follow rules. Lastly, students could participate in a follow-up activity to practice what the book taught them. The follow-up activity could be a fun game that corresponds with the lesson. There could be a chart with four categories that say: be ready to learn, show respect, get along, and stay safe. Students should take an index card from a pile that has a rule written on it and give the class a clue about the rule. For example, if the rule says “listen” on the index card, the student could say, “I hear the teacher give me directions.” Once the students guess the correct rule category for the rule, it can then be posted under that section. “Listen” would go under “be ready to learn.” This activity would help to keep students engaged and motivated throughout the lesson, and serve as an assessment tool.
In a beautifully written true story, *Pink and Say*, by Patricia Polacco, Pinkus Aylee (Pink), a black Union soldier, finds Sheldon Curtis (Say), a white Union soldier, injured in a field. Pink carries him home to be tended by his mother, Moe Moe Bay. The three characters forge a powerful bond while Say is healing. During this time, in reaction to learning that Pink’s master had taught him to read, Say relates that he once shook the hand of Abraham Lincoln. When Pink touches Say’s hand as a sign of hope, Say delivers the reoccurring line: “Now you can say you touched the hand that shook the hand of Abraham Lincoln!” After the untimely death of Moe Moe Bay, the two boys attempt to rejoin the Union troops. They are quickly captured and sent to Andersonville Prison, where Pink reaches for Say’s hand one last time. Ultimately, Say survives to live a long life and to pass this story down from generation to generation, where it ends up with Patricia Polacco, Say’s great-great-granddaughter. Pink does not survive. Polacco dedicates the book “to the memory of Pinkus Aylee” and asks that the readers “remember him always.”

This book is a work that can span a number of grades and it is an excellent starting point to begin discussing the Civil War. I would use this as a springboard for a 5th grade unit. Children can relate to the characters, which helps them better understand the information being given. Not only is it an extremely moving story, it also effectively introduces a number of important themes and points of view during this time period. The illustrations flow well with the story, and it is not a book that is easily forgotten.

That being said, *Pink and Say* can be used to touch upon a number of the National Council for the Social Studies’ themes. On the topic of culture (standard 1), students can compare what life in the United States is like today to what life was like during the Civil War. Such a conversation can lend itself to the theme of time, continuity, and change (standard 2). Students can discuss aspects of the war that are visible in the book, and what might have happened leading up to, during, and after the war. People, Places, and Environments (standard 3) can be easily discussed with regard to where the book takes place and the various characters, which bridges nicely to Individuals, Groups, and Institutions (standard 5). Students can study characters as individuals—Union and Confederate troops, as well as blacks and whites—as groups, and democracy as an institution. Children can talk about who they think held the power in Civil War America and if that type of authority seemed reasonable or unreasonable. Civic Ideals and Practices (standard 10) also come into play when students discuss the end of the story and how each boy was treated differently and why. The book speaks of ethnicity, social class, race, culture, religion, language and dialect, all without directly addressing the topics head on. *Pink and Say* tells a story that students can pull facts and evidence from regarding that time period. Most importantly, perhaps, is how moving the story is. It leaves a mark within students and they are apt to think about why. If they were moved, as most children are by the grave injustice done to one or both boys in the story, the students will certainly employ greater civic efficacy when faced with future injustice. It is not far-fetched to say that this book can make greater citizens out of our students.
In using this book as an introduction to teach a 5th grade social studies unit on the Civil War, I would employ a number of strategies. I find it absolutely essential to create a K-W-L chart before reading Pink and Say. Students will fill in the chart with what they “Think They Know” (K) about the Civil War and “What We Want to Know” (W). This is to see if students have any prior knowledge of the event before proceeding. Once I have read the book aloud, the students will fill in “What We Learned” (L). The students will see this type of chart again as we learn more about the Civil War. I will ask students to create a heading on the top of a page in their notebooks labeled “Words about the Civil War,” where I will expect them to jot down any words, including themes and ideas that they hear as I am reading aloud. These words must relate to the story and the Civil War. The object of this is to see what stands out to the students and to then address the material following the reading. Common words students might write include: soldiers, Union, Confederate, pain, fright, Abraham Lincoln, slavery, and death/survival. As I read the story, I would stop every couple of pages to discuss what is occurring to be sure that students are grasping the content. Once the book has been read, it is important to discuss as a class what we have learned about the Civil War. Much of the material may be new to the students and will need to be explained or investigated as a class.

Pink and Say should serve as an interest builder for an upcoming unit. I would provide ample material about the Civil War for students to look through in order to satisfy their curiosity. The power of the book is what really sparks something within the students; it is that feeling that I want to build upon as a teacher.
Film Reviews

Argo (2012)
Reviewed by David Bendlin

The 2012 film Argo, directed by Ben Affleck, is a dramatization of the events that transpired following a 1980 invasion of the American embassy in Iran. Rather than describe the broader episode of the Iranian Hostage Crisis, the film focuses on the story of six American diplomats and the joint efforts of the CIA and the Canadian government that have come to be known as the “Canadian Caper.” In 1979, Iranian revolutionaries stormed the American embassy in Iran, capturing fifty-two American diplomats. During the bedlam, six Americans managed to escape and flee to the residence of the Canadian ambassador. The CIA and Tony Mendez, played by Ben Affleck, devise a plan revolving around a fictitious movie production entitled “Argo.” Mendez, the CIA, the Canadian government, and a select group of Hollywood producers smuggle the six Americans out of Iran, while avoiding being exposed and captured.

Argo relates to topics in both US and Global History. The film, although slightly fictionalized, details a particular example of the development of connectedness of different cultures and civilizations. It shows how interactions between and among cultures affect different cultural groups and geographic locations. The film also describes various political systems throughout the world, including how these political entities work with and against one another in a specific issue. Argo offers a unique perspective of the actions taken, as well as analyzes the roles and contributions of individuals and groups during the Iranian Hostage Crisis. The Middle East remains a source of hostility and tension, particularly when considering the role of Iran and its leaders in world affairs today. Set in the Middle East, Argo portrays an example of the global issues that students are required to study in secondary and college-level history courses.

Affleck’s film provides a view into the events that transpired during the Iranian Hostage Crisis that cannot be discovered inside a textbook or while searching the internet. The film’s opening scene is an overhead shot of the revolutionaries burning American flags while storming the embassy. Although the intensity of the actual event will never be recreated, Affleck is, through the film, able to project an imagination of the events that took place. The fear and excitement of the event is amplified through the director's use of the camera, something that can only be achieved through film. An example of this is best seen when the revolutionaries are sprinting through the embassy. Here, a handheld camera is used to film the sequence so that we “see” from the point-of-view of a revolutionary. A list of facts regarding the actions and events leading up to, and concluding in, the hostages’ release may act as a suitable description. However, the opportunity to view the event in a recreation in the director's perspective of the crisis is incomparable in other forms of expression.

As a potential teaching tool, Argo would prove to be extremely effective. The relationship between the countries outside and the countries within the Middle East must be covered in history courses. The issues that are seen in countries like Iran have a direct effect on the outside world; as seen with the Iranian Hostage Crisis then, or economic sanctions seen today. If used properly, Argo can illustrate the events of the hostage crisis, as well as
identify the location in which many of the crucial events occur. The film is not only useful to those interested in learning about the hostage crisis. This film can also be used to portray the actions of revolutionaries around the world. With similar events occurring in recent times (revolutions in Bahrain, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria), the visualizations offered in *Argo* can be used effectively to help visual learners identify with the desired topics. Affleck's *Argo* is a dramatization of real-life events that transpired in the Iranian Hostage Crisis that can be used to further describe the relationships of Western nations and the Middle East, as well as the actions of revolutionaries amidst the changing of government regimes.

*Life is Beautiful* (1997)
Reviewed by Benjamin Freud

Released in 1997 and winner of three Oscars, *Life is Beautiful* is an Italian film recounting the story—or the fable, as the narrator puts it—of an ingenious and charismatic Jewish man, Guido, who in 1939 arrives in a small town to work as a waiter in his uncle’s *Grand Hotel*. The story is divided into two distinct parts. The first consists of Guido’s pursuit of Dora, a local teacher whom he calls *principessa* (implying that he is her prince). Since Dora is engaged to an arrogant but powerful civil servant, Guido orchestrates falsely coincidental meetings that charm the woman as well as the audience. The first part of the film is more comedy than drama, as the audience follows how the protagonist displays his creativity and energy into the seduction. He eventually succeeds as Dora cannot face a life with her stiff, inconsiderate fiancé. As Guido whiskers Dora away to his house, the movie fades to a scene during the final months of the Second World War. This second part of the film takes place away from the town, as Guido and his son Joshua are taken by the German authorities to a labor camp because they are Jewish (or at least Guido is). As the train is about to depart, Dora, who is not Jewish, demands to an SS officer she be allowed on board the train and taken away with her husband and son. The story becomes much darker in the camp, though with the growing sense of drama remains humor, as Guido spends the entirety of his time trying to shelter Joshua from the truth behind the reason for their imprisonment and the probable fate that awaits them. Guido plays on Joshua’s passion for tanks to convince him that they are playing a game where the winner (amongst all the other contestant/prisoners) will be rewarded with a real tank once he achieves 1,000 points. To reach this goal, Guido tells Joshua that he must follow along and obey certain rules, rules that are intended in effect to save his life. For instance, Guido tells Joshua that he is never to show himself to the guards or they will be immediately eliminated from the game and sent home. The film ends as American troops (arriving in a tank!) free the camp and its prisoners, and Joshua is reunited with his mother, Guido having been executed the night before.

The film relates to social studies courses by examining two of the twentieth century’s most significant events: the rise of fascism and the Holocaust. During the first part of the movie, fascism is a constant motif, even if only as a driving force to advance the film’s more romantic plot line. For instance, Guido impersonates an important minister who has come to the town to inspect the school. Though this is nothing more than an excuse to interact with Dora, the audience is exposed to many fascist themes, including the importance of the state, the hierarchization of race, and how education inculcates of certain values at a young age. Race politics also play an
important role as Guido’s uncle is repeatedly the victim of anti-semitic crimes, notably physical beatings and the vandalizing of his horse with the painted words “Achtung: Jewish horse.” With characteristic insouciance, Guido dismisses these acts, or rather does not believe himself threatened in spite of his own Jewish background. Throughout the first part of the film, the aura of Mussolini is ever-present, be it through inscriptions on walls or through his overpowering portrait in the main room of the local bank. Il Duce, the state, and fascist ideology exist everywhere in the sleepy, otherwise paradisaic town.

In the second part of the film, the audience sees how the Jews are continually harassed and eventually taken aboard trains to the camps (by German authorities, not Italian, though we are never told of Italy’s civil war after Mussolini’s capture), where they undergo a triage, separating first men from women, and then children and the older prisoners from those who can work. Scenes of squalor, hunger, and death follow Guido and Joshua’s adventures. Guido is forced to carry heavy loads of metal as part of the camp’s industrial production. Some prisoners are asked to take showers but never come back, their clothing left to the women prisoners to sort through. The film ends with the pandemonium that ensues when the Germans abandon the camp, burning documents and loading equipment, but also transporting as many prisoners as possible to an undetermined place from which they will not return. Finally, the Americans liberate the camp and the story ends. The Second World War is the background for the film and a vital part of many social studies courses.

When watching this film, I was surprised by how early (the first part of the film takes place in 1939) racial politics played a role in Italy. I had always had the impression that Mussolini was not as interested in pursuing Jews as the Nazis, but I suppose this does not mean that there were no groupuscules with anti-semitic sentiments who carried out violent acts against Jews. This underscored for me the idea that the Nazis had not introduced anti-semitism to Europe (a notion too often forgotten); they tapped already existing sentiments. This point may not have been completely new to me, but it did make me want to learn more about anti-semitism in Italy. Moreover, during the scene where Guido impersonates the government minister, he is asked to deliver a speech on the superiority of the Aryan race. Again, I was under the impression that fascism played more on the idea of nation than the superiority of the Aryan race, of which the Italians are not the most obvious members. The filmmakers also show how some Italians held the Germans—the supposedly most Aryan of races—in admiration. This too made me want to investigate more on the racial politics of the Fascist Party. For me personally, these are important points to explore rather than learning points in themselves, but I would not have been curious to know more without having watched this film.

This film is effective as a teaching tool precisely because, though it does not address historical events directly, it exists in parallel to a number of important issues. The audience is aware of the tragedy that is unfolding, but it is not subject to direct violence. The themes are heavy, but they are not overpowering and this means that they may be more appropriate for a younger high school audience than a more brutal film such as The Pianist (which would have been my other choice). The story is light-hearted, charming and funny, and there is a good mix of romantic and historical plots to keep students interested. The idea is to show them a beautiful film that touches upon many different topics of the time while keeping their attention. Since the film alludes to so many issues (anti-semitism, fascism, the Holocaust), it serves as a wonderful starting point to engage the students into further discussion, continued exploration, or even just a sense of what life was like during this time. Tasks can even be assigned to ask students which elements of fascism or the war affect the protagonists, the plot, or
simply serve as background. Lastly, I asked myself whether it made sense to show a non-English film (that is, where the students have to read subtitles) to a high school class, but I thought that the grade level at which this film would be shown would be high enough that it would be a good opportunity to introduce the students to foreign films (those who have not yet been exposed).

Reviewed by Alexandra Feliciano

_Memoirs of a Geisha_ (2005), directed by Rob Marshall, was adapted from Arthur Golden’s novel and produced in part by Steven Spielberg. This film gained much praise in the US and Europe, but was widely criticized in Asia, particularly in Japan.

This film follows the life of Chiyo, a young girl who was sold to a Geisha house in the Gion district in the city of Kyoto in the 1930s. After being sold by her father, who could no longer afford to take care of her and her sister in their fishing village, Chiyo works as a maid in an _okiya_ (geisha house) while learning to be a geisha. These houses employed Geishas to entertain wealthy men. The film depicts her hard life as a geisha in training and the obstacles in front of her, such as her orphaning, certain jealous elders, and the hardships of World War II. She needs to become a geisha out of necessity, and in her practice, she is acquainted with a kind and wealthy man with whom she falls in love. However, the many protocols and obstacles of the geisha culture forbid the two from being together. Ultimately, Sayuri (formerly Chiyo) becomes a famous geisha who reunites with this man after the war and the two are able to be together, but only in the geisha culture, as a geisha is not a full wife; she is someone who entertains and provides company.

In watching _Memoirs of a Geisha_, I learned about an otherwise undisclosed part of Japanese culture. Prior to watching this film, I did not know much more about the geisha life than the stereotypical image of painted white faces and red lips. It seems that while the lifestyle is out of necessity, rather than choice, the women take it very seriously in order to become, as described in the film, walking art. This film comes under criticism for its factual premise. The author of the book used as a basis for this film interviewed several geishas to learn more about this secret world. Since it is very guarded, one woman had disclosed many truths about the world of the geisha, but in doing so, she disgraced her kind. She later sued the author and, as a result, he has said that this was a work of fiction. Nevertheless, there are truths to the storyline in both the book and film.

As a teaching tool, this film can be used to describe social aspects and dominant cultural values of the Showa-era in Japan. It can also be used as a prelude to a lesson on the Second World War’s impact on everyday life in Japan and in the wake of the United States’ subsequent occupation. The film portrays a life that is hard, yet where upward mobility can be achieved. The men, in both military and political positions, hold great wealth and live elaborate lifestyles where they host the geisha women.

During WWII, the film depicts planes flying overhead, while people run for their lives. The main character flees to a kimono maker’s home in a rural village in the hills of Japan, where she has to harvest rice and clean silk in
order to survive. She cannot stay with people she knows, as the city of Osaka is considered a prime target and unsafe for her. She now has to live a lifestyle where dancing and tea houses are nothing but a distant memory. Lines including, “The old life is a dream life,” and “Did I ever dance?” show how her world has changed completely due to the war. She later learns the General has been captured, leading to a great loss of fortune by many. In order to rebuild, she is told that the help of American patronage is needed. Students can be asked to think critically about this time period in Japan and also reference other factual works to aid in this topic.

Every military society has its own views concerning the proper conduct of its warriors; the United States Marine Corps, for example, stresses the values of honor (possessing a high standard of personal integrity), courage (possessing moral strength), and commitment (remaining dedicated to God, country, and the Corps). These values are staple ideas amongst other military societies, but their interpretations differ from culture to culture. Due to my extensive study of Japanese history, I have held a deep curiosity about the philosophies of that country’s infamous warrior class, the samurai, and have often wondered about what their interpretation of these values would be like, most notably, the samurai practice of *hara-kiri*, or ritual suicide, which is also known as *seppuku*. What reasons would anyone have for creating such a precise way of committing suicide, and under which conditions should a samurai commit such an act? In my observations of the two films I reviewed, *Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai* and *13 Assassins*, I was unable to attain answers to my first question. Nevertheless, they were able to give me a new understanding of why the samurai would find a need to take their own lives in the service to their lord. It is important to note that both films are remakes of films previously released in 1962 and 1963, and were directed by the same man, Miike Takashi.

The first film, *Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai*, revolves around the story of Tsugumo Hanshirō, a rōnin, or warrior without a lord, living in the early years of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Hanshirō has arrived at the estate of the Li clan, a family that has seen much prosperity under Tokugawa rule, to request that he be granted permission to commit *seppuku* at their estate—a common request for lord-less samurai at the time. However, Saitō Kageyu, a counselor for the clan, warns Hanshirō that other rōnin have been going to the estates of other lords, threatening to commit *seppuku* in the hopes of receiving charity from the lord of the house and perhaps even being assigned as a warrior. Saitō relates to Hanshirō a story of one such rōnin from Hanshirō’s former clan, Chijiwa Motome, who arrived sometime earlier and had asked for charity before being forced to go through with committing suicide.

It is revealed that the sword Motome had brought with him was not real; it was a bamboo sword. He was forced to use that very sword to take his own life, depicted in the film to be agonizing. It is later revealed that Motome was in fact Hanshirō’s son-in-law, who needed money to purchase medicine for his wife and son. When Motome’s body was returned to his family, Hanshirō observed the circumstances behind Motome’s death. He has begun to mete out justice by facing Motome’s “second” (a swordsman who assists in the suicide by cutting
off the warrior’s head with a clean stroke), and taking his topknot, the loss of which is considered shameful for samurai.

As Saitō orders the Li samurai to kill Hanshirō for his deception, Hanshirō finally reveals his true purpose for coming to the Li estate: to show Saitō and the other Li samurai the true meaning of honor by fending off their attacks with a bamboo sword of his own. The battle between them rages throughout the house until Hanshirō finally arrives in a room where the armor of the Lord of Li is ornately displayed. Upon viewing this display, Hanshirō remarks that a samurai’s honor should not be displayed for show, and knocks an attacker into the armor, scattering it over the floor. Hanshirō, having lost his bamboo sword at this point, allows himself to be cut down by Li’s warriors.

The end of the film reveals that Motome’s second and other Li swordsman that Hanshirō has defeated and shamed before meeting with Saitō eventually took their own lives in order to recover their honor. However, this gesture is all for naught, as Saitō lists their deaths as illnesses in order to hide the fact that they were defeated by a rōnin and protect the House of Li’s appearance of honor.

Though just as engaging, the plot of 13 Assassins is much less intricate and complex. The movie takes place in the 1840s, about two decades before the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and begins with a prominent counselor of the current shogun committing seppuku in protest over the cruel actions of Matsudaira Naritsugu, the Lord of Akashi and half-brother of the shogun. With the understanding that Naritsugu’s potential rise to a prominent position within the shogun’s council could spell disaster for the people, the shogun’s chief justice, Doi Toshitsura, secretly tasks Shimada Shinzaemon, a veteran samurai who was once an elite guard to the shogun, with the burden of assassinating Lord Naritsugu on his way from Edo to his domain of Akashi.

Shinzaemon, with the help of twelve other warriors, including his nephew, Shimada Shinrokrō, prepares for the assassination plot. He purchases an entire town that Lord Naritsugu must pass through on his way to Akashi and sets up traps in the town in order to ensure Naritsugu’s demise. He then ensures that Naritsugu and his retinue cannot bypass the town by having a samurai, who has been wronged by Naritsugu, block his way by refusing Naritsugu an invitation to his lord’s lands. That samurai then commits seppuku to save his lord the shame of having insulted the shogun’s half-brother.

As Naritsugu and his escort (numbering over two-hundred warriors) reach the town, the traps are sprung and a fierce battle ensues. Both Akashi retainers and the thirteen assassins suffer near complete massacres until only Shinzaemon, Shinrokrō, and Naritsugu remain. Shinzaemon and Naritsugu mortally wound each other, and as Naritsugu begins to realize the fear of impending death, he thanks Shinzaemon for providing him with such an eventful day. Shinzaemon accepts his thanks and cuts off his head. As Shinzaemon succumbs to his wounds, he tells his nephew that, “the life of a samurai is truly a burden,” and that Shinrokrō should do what he wants with his life. Shinrokrō is last seen observing the burning remains of the town, pondering his uncle’s words.

What I found most interesting about both films is that they detailed the life of samurai from two different perspectives. In Hara-Kiri, the lord-less samurai are depicted as disgraced and without honor; in the view of other samurai, rōnin should save face by committing seppuku. Hanshirō attempts to show that it is the Li samurai who have no honor, but Saitō, who only sees the visual aspects of samurai honor, largely ignores his
gesture. In *13 Assassins*, Shinzaemon finds his title as a samurai to be a burden; although he does not elaborate on what this burden exactly is, I can only assume the burden he spoke of was the burden of serving his lord with honor. Furthermore, I came to find that there were more reasons for samurai to commit *seppuku* than I previously thought. I was under the impression that samurai took their own lives if they were disgraced in combat, or if they committed a shameful act. Through both films, I came to the understanding that samurai would also take their own lives in protest to an action that their lord committed, or if they had no lord to serve.

I found these films to be quite instructional and important in understanding the history of Japan before the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and not only for the action sequences. The image of the samurai in armor with weapon in hand, ready to face an opponent, is only half of the portrait. There is a deeper image of a man, who despite any personal reservations, must serve their lord and preserve their sense of honor. I think these films would be valuable tools to teach students about this time period in Japanese history because they do away with some misconceptions about the samurai and give them a deeper understanding of this warrior society.

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**Gandhi (1982)**

Reviewed by **Ronald Powers**

*Gandhi*, a film starring Ben Kingsley, takes the viewer from Gandhi’s first fight in South Africa in 1893 to his assassination in 1948. The film, directed by Richard Attenborough, won eight Academy Awards, including Best Actor, Best Director, and Best Picture. The first part of the film traces Gandhi’s fight against discrimination in South Africa soon after he graduated law school and was hired by a rich Hindu businessman to fight discrimination. While on a train to Pretoria, a white rider complained to the conductor that he would not share a compartment with a colored person. Gandhi refused to move and was forcibly evicted from both the compartment and the train. He spent the next twenty years in South Africa fighting against the discrimination inflicted upon Indians. It was during this period that Gandhi would adopt the protest form of using non-violence, or passive resistance, to later seek freedom from Britain. His biggest triumph in South Africa would be the repeal of an act that required all Indians to be fingerprinted and carry a pass for identification. This was accomplished by being jailed and the non-violent protests conducted on behalf of the Indians.

The film follows Gandhi’s continuing struggle back to India, which seemed to be “an alien country,” beginning in 1915, and his fight against the British for independence. In 1919, at a gathering for religious celebrations, in what would be known as the Amritsar massacre, British Col. Dyer opened fire on the unarmed crowd, killing more than 1,500 civilians. He later claimed he did it to teach the civilians a lesson for breaking martial law. This led to more protests and Gandhi being jailed again. The agenda was now independence; defy martial law and accomplish a unity of Muslim and Hindu Indians. Crowds attacked and killed British police; Gandhi went on a hunger strike to again protest the violence; this was his method of passive resistance. Then, in direct defiance of British law, Gandhi would lead a 240-mile march to the coast to make salt and pay no tax. He would be arrested again. Returning from a conference in London, where freedom was still not yet achieved, he continued his passive resistance campaign. His wife would die shortly afterward. When freedom was finally granted, there
would be violence between Muslims and Hindus. Gandhi fasted against violence almost until his death and the creation of Pakistan and India. In January 1948, ironically, a Hindu fanatic would shoot and kill Gandhi.

The film relates to global history because it is a biographical account of Mahatma Gandhi, one of the most important figures of the 20th century, who shaped the new world. It chronicles the effects of colonialism by one nation perpetuated on a people and the effects on its society. British control of India was only one example of colonialism and imperialism at the time. It details how one man had such an important role in changing the course of history, not only for India, but for the world. Equally important was his commitment to change by passive resistance and non-violence, even when British forces often attacked Indian protestors. Many protestors throughout the world, most notably Dr. Martin Luther King during the Civil Rights movement, would copy Gandhi’s concept of passive resistance. It also chronicles the violence between two major religions and the important role his wife played in this journey.

Although I thought I knew a lot about Gandhi, there were several areas that the film encompassed which I was not familiar with. The first area was his journey to South Africa, where he spends nearly 21 years protesting non-violently for the civil rights of Hindus and Muslims living there. Most of Gandhi’s views and strategies would be developed there and later used against the British in India. A second area was the pivotal role his wife played throughout his life. She traveled with him during his struggle in South Africa and later India. She would also be jailed several times only because she was the wife of Mahatma and she shared his visions. On many occasions when her husband was jailed, she would speak in his place.

The most surprising piece of history the film imparted was how difficult independence would be, once granted. I thought it was granted and India was free. However, the film chronicles the arguments between Muslim and Hindu leaders (with Gandhi stuck in the middle) about who should be the first prime minister and how to safeguard the rights of the Muslim minority. The internal conflicts eventually led to the partition of India by the British into two countries, India and Pakistan. This would be accomplished at great cost, with many Hindus and Muslims being killed in the violence following independence from Britain. Gandhi, who always believed that both religions could live side by side, would fast almost to death in an effort to stop the violence. The issue of prime minister would be resolved after Nehru, a Hindu, who was by Gandhi’s side from the beginning, would be named the first prime minister of India.

This film runs three hours; it would take at least three classes to complete, which to some teachers might be a lot of class time. However, this film can fit into global history classes because it touches on many concepts that the curriculum requires. Topics covered include colonialism, colonial rule, passive resistance as a form of protest for change, religious conflict, and how countries are born. The life of Gandhi is itself an important story as it unfolds in this film. When teachers talk about historical figures, it is usually done in a few short sentences summarizing the accomplishments. A film such as this one goes beyond those accomplishments, telling the obstacles, setbacks, and personal sacrifices that are required to achieve a goal, in this case the birth of a nation. This film chronicles the long journey from the beginning, visually and vividly portraying the strong commitment to a cause, and the courage and strength it takes to reach the goal. The film also serves as differentiated instruction using both video and audio for students.
Field Trip Destination: The Peekskill Museum
Reviewed by Stephanie Casalinuovo

The Peekskill Museum is a perfect place to visit for a slice of history in the Hudson-Valley area. The museum, which is actually a Victorian house, was the previous home of Dwight Stiles Herrick and his family in 1878. It was founded in 1945 and is home to many old artifacts, such as furniture (some even original to the Herrick family), iron stoves, original marble fireplaces, original hardwood floors and moldings on the ceilings, and much more. The museum is staged like a home, which gives great insight to wealthy living in the late 19th century, along with a main room, which has displays that are changed to coordinate with its programs.

The Peekskill Museum is a great trip for 5th graders learning about slavery, the industrial revolution, and independence for America. Peekskill is well known for its industrial factories and manufacturing of iron plows and iron stoves, which were shipped worldwide. These iron factories were called “foundries,” and thousands of stoves, which ran off coals to heat homes and cook food, were made in Peekskill in 1895. Peekskill was also an important location in the Underground Railroad to help free slaves and lead them toward Canada. Hawley and Harriet Green, a local African-American family, were of great help in aiding slaves. The Herrick family was even closely acquainted with Henry Ward Beecher, who was the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of the anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

Peekskill was also home to many battles, one occurring when the British invaded Peekskill in 1777. The British arrived with 500 men, ready to attack, on Sunday, March 23, 1777. However, they were forced out by an American counterattack on the following day. General George Washington even maintained a headquarters in Peekskill known as the Birdsal House. Washington felt that Peekskill was a good strategic location for gaining America’s independence. Nearly a century later, in 1861, William Nelson, a Peekskill attorney, wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln asking him to pass through Peekskill on his way to his presidential inauguration. Because of this visit, the Lincoln Society was established in Peekskill (it still exists today).

This museum also shows how servants lived in comparison to the wealthy. The beautiful and intricate designs of the floors and walls were located only in the parts of the house intended for family use. Any part of the house, like the kitchen, which was occupied by the servants, had plain wood floors, with no embellishments. The servants even had to use a separate back staircase running directly into the kitchen. The servants, however, did have relatively comfortable living accommodations. In this house, they lived on the uppermost floor, which consisted of a small three-bedroom apartment with an outdoor balcony section for sitting (now used as storage and not for viewing in the museum).
Because there is so much to take in at this museum, the best way to go would be to choose one area of study, like living arrangements and social status. Before the visit, students should have background knowledge on this time period. Therefore, they should be able to make comparisons between what they have read and what they will see during their visit. After the visit, students can make comparisons to what they saw, like separate living arrangements for servants, as well as the idea of having servants at all, to how they currently live and even the changes in clothing. This is just one example of integrating the past to the present and the vast changes that have come about over the years, and a great visual way to do it for students.

Field Trip Destination: The Hispanic Society of America
Reviewed by Ana Hernandez

The Hispanic Society of America is a free museum and reference library for the study of the arts and cultures of Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. The museum, which first opened in 1904, is located on Audubon Terrace and contains an incredible collection of paintings and drawings from the Middle Ages to the present, including the Spanish Golden Age between 1550 and 1700. The museum’s collections offer a comprehensive account of Spain’s history from the Bronze Age to Roman rule. In addition, the collection contains Islamic and Christian sculptures dating from the Middle Ages to the early 20th century. Furthermore, the museum has on display a collection of textiles and carpets demonstrating craft mastery in the Iberian Peninsula and pointing to the legacy of Arab rule in the region. The museum’s library offers researchers materials on history and culture, including books, periodicals, and manuscripts dating to the Middle Ages in Spanish history.

Historical Overview of the Iberian Peninsula

The Iberian Peninsula is situated in the south-west extreme of Europe and includes the countries of Spain and Portugal. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west, and by the Mediterranean Sea to the south and east. The Pyrenees Mountains separate it from the rest of Europe. Iberia was a name imposed by Greek geographers to the peninsula itself and not to any particular nation-state. During the Roman Republic, geographers and poets called the peninsula Hispania, from which the name Spain is derived. The Romans invaded Hispania around 218 BCE and Latin became the official language for more than 600 years. Much of the Punic Wars fought between the Romans and the Carthaginians were fought in the Iberian Peninsula. As part of a peace treaty, Carthage relinquished control of the peninsula to the Romans. Hispania supplied the Roman Empire with metals and grains. The Romans divided Hispania into two parts for administrative purposes: Hispania Ulterior and Hispania Citerior. Christianity was introduced to Hispania in the 1st century; by the 4th century, it was the official religion of the peninsula. Rome dominated the peninsula until the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 CE. Iberian people fell under the tutelage of the Visigoths, a group of Germanic people. Byzantine Emperor Justinian regained a small portion of the peninsula from the Visigoths after an internal dispute for control of the peninsula among the Visigoths’ kings. Between 711 and 719, Muslims from northern Africa, called Moors, conquered the peninsula. The Reconquista, led by the Christian kingdoms on the
north of the peninsula, defeated the Muslims in 1492. During the 16th century, Spain and Portugal led world exploration. Arts and literature flourished in Spain during the 16th and 17th centuries. This period, known as the Spanish Golden Age, spanned from the end of the Spanish Reconquista and the time of Christopher Columbus’s voyages to 1659, with the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees.

**Museum Collections**

*Paintings:* Paintings date from the Middle Ages to the 20th century in Spanish history, particularly paintings from the Spanish Golden Age and the 19th century. The collection includes paintings from Antonis Mir, El Greco, Diego Velázquez, as well as specially paintings, drawings, and prints from Francisco de Goya.

*Decorative Arts:* The Hispanic Society contains arts from Spain, Portugal, Latin America, the Philippines, and Portuguese India. The collection is rich in ceramics, including the three-thousand-year-old Bell Beaker pottery. Many ceramics combine the Islamic and Western traditions that prevailed in Spain between the 15th and 17th centuries. This collection also includes furniture, silver, glassware, ironwork, and textiles from the 15th to 19th centuries. Textiles include silks from medieval Islamic Spain.

*Archaeology:* This collection includes objects from Spain’s Bronze Age to Roman rule, including works reflecting the Ibero-Phoenician, Greek, and Celtiberian cultures. It also includes Roman ceramics, glass, metalwork, mosaics, and statuary.

*Sculpture:* The collection includes ancient, classical, Islamic, and Christian works dating to the Middle Ages, as well as examples of 16th-century Gothic and Renaissance sculptures. It also includes statues of El Cid, Don Quixote, and Boabdil.

*Library:* The library contains a collection of more than 600,000 books, manuscripts, documents, and letters from the 10th century to the present for the Spanish and Portuguese worlds. The library also contains books from early Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, and Puerto Rico. Furthermore, the collection includes works from Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and historical documents from Latin America and the Philippines.

*Prints and Photographs:* The collection contains around 15,000 prints from 17th-century artists, such as Ribera and Goya. The photograph collection contains over 176,000 black and white photos of the Hispanic world, including Latin America and Spain.

**Publications, Group Visits, and Education**

The Hispanic Society publishes books about its collections. It also publishes postcards, note cards, and posters. The education department provides gallery talks, group tours, and activities. It also has materials for educators.

**Classroom Connection**

Ancient classical civilizations, including those of the Greeks and the Romans, are intrinsically connected to the development of the societies of the Western Hemisphere, including Latin America. Spain’s past is sprinkled with remnants of the many invasions it suffered throughout its history. Carthaginian, Roman, Greek, Visigoth, and Muslim civilizations provided a mosaic of cultural influences that helped shape the expeditionary Spain of
the 1490s. It is important for students to understand the direct contributions and connections classical civilizations had on our modern world. Connecting Spain and Portugal, the leaders in world exploration, to these classical civilizations will provide a more personal approach and understanding to what may be an ambiguous and abstract account of world history. A visit to the Hispanic Society will give students a vivid account of old world history.

**Pre-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

As part of a thematic unit on ancient civilizations, students will become familiar with the classical civilizations and the contributions and influences they made, not only on Asian, African, and European peoples, but also to the Americas through the Europeans’ conquest of the new continent. Students will identify the present-day countries that were once under the rule of the Hellenistic Empire, the Roman Empire, the Germanic tribes, and so forth. They will be familiar with how the legacy of these civilizations transcended and influenced the foundation of those that later influenced the creation of new societies and countries. They will learn how art, architecture, politics, philosophical thinking, religion, and customs changed for the ancient conquered groups, and how they, in turn, became colonizers and rulers of foreign lands.

**During-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

Students will be divided into five groups, one group for each one of the museum’s collections. Students will collect the names of paintings and artifacts, the dates of their creation, and any other pertinent information about the exhibit. They will collect brochures and record any information the tour guide provides about the exhibition. They will need as much information as possible, as they will conduct research in class about the cultural and political pressures Spain endured at the time the artifacts were created. They will also work in groups to complete a writing assignment for an in-class presentation.

**Post-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

With the collected information, students will work in groups to complete several assignments for presentation. Spanish-speaking ELLs will easily be able to participate in map creations, as the names of places in the Iberian Peninsula are in Spanish or Portuguese. Maps will detail the regional divisions during Roman rule, Muslim rule, and after the Reconquista. Students will also create a Spanish/English art book based on the museum-observed artifacts. They will provide a list with pictures of things observed, and say to which Spanish historical period it belongs. Students will need to mention if Spain was under the rule of any of the classical civilizations. Groups will need to write an essay in which they will summarize the contributions and influences of the classical civilizations to Spain and to the world, one classical civilization per group. Limited English speakers will read in their native language, or a topic-related picture book in English, and complete a cloze activity. They will also need to write a five-sentence paragraph about their museum visit.
Field Trip Destination: John Jay Homestead Museum
Reviewed by Camille Costantino

The John Jay Homestead in Katonah, New York is an amazing museum that is not only valuable because it pertains to John Jay’s role in our nation’s colonial past, but also because it is a treasure trove of educational resources for adults and children. For adults, the museum offers historical essays on its website, lectures held at its facilities, and research visits made by appointment. One could investigate the Homestead’s archival holdings of family papers that cover topics such as slavery, abolition, and agriculture. There is also the general reference library that has secondary sources on the American Revolution, the Federal Period, the Jay family genealogy, nineteenth-century American history, agriculture, art, and horticulture, among other similar subject matter. As a teacher—particularly one in history—these research materials, as well as the lectures and essays, can provide useful information for lesson plans. The Homestead will also lend schools artifacts from their private collections, which can add an important dimension to lessons. Although this is all important and valuable, it is nothing compared to how much this site itself caters to teachers, students, and schools.

The John Jay Homestead offers a multitude of educational programs that go beyond just touring the historic home and making comparisons to modern times and the past. There is an educational staff at the museum that will work with teachers to design programs around their specific curricular needs. These educational visits last about 2 1/2 hours and include a tour of the historic farm museum or the historic house museum, plus an educational activity. They will make accommodations for students with physical and/or developmental disabilities. The Homestead limits groups to 60 students per visit, but they can make special accommodations for larger groups. There are also picnic grounds available for students to have lunch, and in the event of disagreeable weather, there are indoor spaces. In addition, the Homestead’s website offers various downloadable lesson plans for grades K-12 that correspond to the programs offered at the John Jay Homestead. There are six offered programs and lessons, all of them multi-subject based. Some of the programs and corresponding lessons are entitled: “Then and Now,” “John Jay’s Farm,” and “John Jay, Revolution Spy Master.” The lessons are designed to meet current national and New York State standards. Best of all, they encourage students to employ the same critical thinking skills of a social scientist or historian by requiring them to read, analyze, apply, synthesize, and evaluate historical information. The cost for an on-site visit is $2.00-$3.00 per student, depending on the program. The site also has an outreach program that will bring educational programs to the classroom for a flat rate of $50.00 per class. Also, if a school can demonstrate financial need, a teacher can download a grant application for funding transportation through the Margaret Mayo-Smith Bus Fund. The website also has an availability calendar to allow teachers to schedule a time for their group visits, although it is safer to call or e-mail the educational coordinator.

With all that this site has to offer, I would not hesitate to bring my students to the John Jay Homestead. The site is particularly useful when teaching a unit on the colonial history of New York, for there is an excellent program offered at the John Jay Homestead that would fit this unit well. It is called “John Jay, Revolution Spy Master.” The program goes beyond Jay’s more commonly taught political achievements and instead delves into the role he played in creating a spy network to help defend the colonies during the Revolutionary War. At the Homestead, students tour the house looking for secret spy messages while learning about the defenses put into place that protected New York. They also learn about the split loyalties of our state, different spying techniques, and historical anecdotes about the era’s political figures. In addition, students will also use invisible ink to write
their own secret spy messages. This program offers differentiated instruction because it is comprised of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic components. The program is designed for grades 4-8, and it aligns with Social Studies standards 1, 2, 5, and English Language Arts standards 1, 3, and 4.

The website has a downloadable pre-visit packet that could be developed into a pre-trip lesson plan. The packet is comprised of four pages and has pertinent vocabulary words, fun facts regarding John Jay, and an informational story pertaining to Jay and his role as a “Spy Master.” Before using the packet, the class could do a “KWL” chart regarding Jay to establish known information and what they want to learn. Later, the class can add to the L piece based on what they learned in the packet and on the trip. After completing the KWL chart, the students could answer questions pertaining to spies and spying techniques to build excitement and interest. Then, I would explain about our trip and the pre-visit packet. Students could work in pairs or groups to complete the packet. A similar, modified packet could be provided for learning disabled and EL students if necessary. After the trip, in addition to revisiting the original KWL chart, the class could participate in a lesson based on the ciphering activity that the program offers. As always, the lesson should be altered as necessary with additional or modified materials for any of students who need such provisions.

The John Jay Homestead is a rich resource of materials for historians, history buffs, and teachers. There are also many more resources that this site has to offer, such as a farmers’ market, bee keeping seminars, spring break mini camps, history adventure days, and much more. It is impressive how they offer so much to accommodate students and teachers, and the programs they run are fascinating, and geared to students of all ages and abilities. I truly believe that the John Jay Homestead is a valuable resource that should be utilized by history teachers, and it is one that I will definitely use.

Field Trip Destination: El Museo del Barrio
Reviewed by Ana Hernandez

Born out of the popular struggle to have access to educational and cultural resources in the mid to late 1960s, El Museo del Barrio is a cultural institution in New York City dedicated to preserving the richness of Latin American cultures. El Museo del Barrio has been a learning institution dedicated to bringing educational programs to students, and to training artists, historians, and educators interested in Latin American history. Its collections exhibit more than 800 years of Caribbean and Latin American history, from pre-Columbian times to the present.

Historical Overview of the Caribbean

The Tainos inhabited the Caribbean islands at the time of Columbus’s arrival. The Caribbean became the gateway from which later expeditions set out to discover the rest of the American continent. It is important for students to learn and understand that Latin American art, history, and culture have made great contributions to North America. By examining the way of life, beliefs, and traditions of the Tainos, students may get an understanding of who the Spaniards encountered when they set foot in the unknown territory, as well as why the
Spaniards’ appetite for gold and other precious metals grew, setting them on expeditions to the farthest corners of the American continent.

**Permanent Collections**

Collections are divided into four groups:

*Taino/Pre-Columbian:* This part of the collection contains archeological objects from the pan-Caribbean. It also contains graphics, photographs, and contemporary art influenced by the Taino legacy.

*Popular Traditions:* This part of the collection includes songs, traditions, masks, and folklore from the different Latin American countries.

*Modern and Contemporary Art:* It contains works, paintings, and photography from 1950 to the present. Its photography collection tries to investigate the meaning of reality.

*Graphics:* The part of the collection contains over 4,000 works of art, representing artists from Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Educational Programs**

*Guided Tours:* Inquiry-based guided tours are created to get the visitor involved in a conversation relating to a particular object or work of art. The hour-long tour analyses 4 to 5 objects, providing opportunity for talking, writing, and sketching. These tours are designed to appeal to multiple ways of learning.

*Hands-On Workshops:* Art-making experiences are offered after every guided tour. Visitors may participate in hour-long workshops that give them the opportunity to explore printmaking, painting, collage making, drawing, multi-media, and creative writing experiences. The themes for the guided tours and workshops are drawn from the permanent collections, temporary exhibitions, and cultural celebrations.

*Educational Partnerships:* These are long-term and multi-subject programs with the purpose of maintaining a classroom and Museo del Barrio connection. The program connects the museum’s cultural resources with core subjects, such as social studies, English Language Arts, art, and science. Teaching artists from the museum collaborate with partnering schools and organizations.

**Classroom Connection**

Because the discovery of the American continent was such a paramount event in the course of history, students need to be familiar with the importance the Caribbean basin had in the progressive Spanish dominance of the new territories of the Americas. It is important to know that the Caribbean is not only the tropical paradise that often comes to mind today, but a region that once offered insurmountable richness (gold and silver) to the conquistadors and from which future mainland expeditions were launched. The Caribbean was an exploited region with an equally exploited and abused indigenous population. Students need to understand that America is not only the United States, but a group of states that emerged in the centuries after Columbus’s arrival to the
new world. This kind of cultural and historical connection can be offered every time the secondary social studies curriculum calls for an account of pre-Columbian history.

**Pre-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

As the topic of pre-Columbian History is introduced, and students are learning about the indigenous groups of the Americas, such as the Mayas, Incas, and Aztecs, I would begin my discussion by introducing the Tainos, Caribs, and Arawaks who inhabited the pre-Columbian Caribbean islands. Students would learn about their cultures, traditions, and art. The first few topic-related lessons would heavily rely on internet websites and Smart Boards to allow students to view pre-Columbian history-related materials, from art to artifacts. A pre-trip lesson plan would provide enough visuals and student-centered research information to allow the different learning styles to grasp the topics at the appropriate level. I would also use geography through maps to assist me in pointing specific voyages, to show students the strategic location of the Caribbean, and to name and find the location of the islands Columbus set foot on during his four trips to the new continent. While some students may find relevant reading-related information, others can learn about the discoveries by piecing together information from maps, and era-related drawings and artifacts. Pre-Columbian history can have an interdisciplinary approach aided by other disciplines, including Spanish and reading.

**During-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

During-trip activities can be based on students’ abilities, keeping in mind that the trip’s main purpose is to record observations of cultural and historical material. Students will gather information about religious beliefs, daily life, celebrations, games, music and dance, foods, social groups, and social rules. Stronger students can keep logs of observed materials, while others can draw and collect available fliers, brochures, or any other material related to the studied collections. Selected students can be part of the guided tours, where they can develop a more in-depth appreciation of the art and artifacts examined.

**Post-Trip Lesson Plan Outline**

The collected information can serve many purposes. A group of students can be assigned to create an in-class presentation of the information they collected as it relates to the in-class history lesson. Other students can choose to create small history books where they present the information they gathered, including drawings and pictures of the observed collections. If the museum visit coincides with Hispanic Heritage Month, students can create school-wide presentations and bulletin boards.