

Unit 1: Who Am I?

Farrington High School is located in a high poverty district, which is surrounded by 3 large low income housing projects. Due to the negative effects of poverty, many of the struggling learners in my classes are overwhelmed with the daily obstacles they face outside of school that they give education, particularly reading and writing, a low priority. Consequently, some of the characteristics of my students are they do not come to school with a backpack, folder, paper, books or even a pencil despite being given free supplies. In other words, they do not see themselves as readers or writers. Their lack of knowing how to be a successful student becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy for low academic achievement, which in turn negatively impacts their future.

This past November, the barriers my students face daily became even greater. They tragically lost one of their classmates who was gunned down in front of his house. As my students wandered aimlessly into my classroom following this horrific loss, the message of hope embedded in this unit became imperative. It became a source of stability and comfort for my students who were drowning in a sea of anguish. As a result, they are slowly beginning to see education as a saving grace from all hostilities in this world. As such, my wish is that this unit will continue to serve as a means by which students are encouraged to define their identity and discover their purpose in life in the midst of conflict through the inspiration of literature and music.

In this unit, students will explore a variety of literature and musical genres to analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, the development of the plot, theme and the author's use of stylistic techniques used to convey their message. The purpose of this exploration is to help students understand: 1) How author's teach life lessons through characters and poetry 2) How identities are developed in order to better understand the development of their own and 3) Encourage students to determine their purpose in life. Although it is a goal of the unit to help students achieve the academic standards, the greater goal is to nurture my students toward maturity and wisdom by cultivating a sense of empathy and compassion for themselves and others.

Identify Desired Results (Stage 1)	
<p>Primary Standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3</u> Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme. 2. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2</u> Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. 3. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5</u> Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise. 	<p>Secondary Standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2.B</u> Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. 5. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1.A</u> Uses parallel structure. 6. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1.B</u> Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.
Understandings	Essential Questions
<p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will explore how a person develops their own identity. • Students will understand how thematic lessons can apply to their own lives. • Students will examine different interpretations of coming to age through literature and music.. • Students will understand how their environment influences their coming of age experiences. • Students will begin building empathy and compassion for others. 	<p>Overarching</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does it mean to come of age? 2. How does a person come to age? 3. How does a person develop an identity? 4. What's in a name? 5. How do our personal experiences shape our dreams of who we want to become? 6. How do our dreams and expectations shape our lives? 7. How does an author teach life lessons through fictional characters?

Related Misconceptions

- Some kids may believe coming of age means to age in years (14 years old to 15 years old).
- Theme vs. Central idea vs Topic Ideas vs Moral
- Theme is a moral or lesson-- one word.
- Understanding the broad definition of “loss of innocence”
- Some kids may believe they don’t have environmental influence or where they come from is not significant
- Puberty is a sign of coming of age.
- Going to college or getting a job is coming of age.
- Coming of age is only a result of a singular event.
- One comes of age only through traumatic experiences.
- Some kids may believe they don’t have a culture or that their cultural impact is not significant
 - Cultural understanding of who is a child
 - How gender and culture play in cultural definition of coming of age

Key Knowledge Participants will know...	Key Skills Participants will be able to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coming of age ● Definition of Identity ● Author’s Purpose ● Literary Elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Character - protagonist ○ Conflict - internal conflict vs external conflict ○ Setting - how the environment shapes a character’s identity ○ Point of View ○ Plot development / pacing ○ Theme development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain a character’s development and relate it to coming to age ● Write an objective summary ● Evaluate relevant and sufficient evidence to support ideas ● Develop a clear and concise thesis statement with well-chosen, relevant and sufficient facts from the text. ● Use reading strategies like marking a text, writing in the margins, using context clues, and/or notice and note. ● Apply figurative and connotative language to show how an author develops their purpose or theme ● Write a commentary that elaborates on the evidence adding insightful information

Assessment Evidence (Stage 2)

Performance Assessment

- Write an explanatory essay describing how the main character in a story comes to age?
- Write a memoir describing a coming to age event in your life.

Other planned ways to gather evidence of learning

- Construct a personal timeline.
- Conduct a mini-research on your name.
- Choose a new name for yourself and explain why you chose it.
- Quick Writes
- Thinking Maps

Vocabulary

General Academic

identity vs personality
adjective, verb, subject noun
empathy vs. sympathy
recollection
compare & contrast
coming to age
compassion

Domain Specific

point of view
flashback
foreshadowing
juxtaposition
parallel structure
plot
conflict
theme
imagery

Learning Experiences (Stage 3) -- 43 teaching days

Day 1: Essential question: What does it mean to come of age?

Learning Target:

- **Analyze in detail theme development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.**

Reading Skills:

- Text structure
- Marking the text

Literature Skills: Point of View

Language Skills: n/a

Writing Skills: n/a

Objective:

- **Students will understand that transitioning from childhood to adulthood begins when you see other people's perspectives.**
- **Students will construct a personal timeline and highlight events that opened their eyes to the adult world.**
- **Students will define the term "coming to age."**

Mini-Lessons:

- Point of View
- Marking the text
- Text structure, sequence

As you listen to the song:

["Feel like a kid again" by Lion Fiyah \(Genre: Hawaiian Reggae\)](#)

1. 1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and ask questions or make comments. Also annotate the following:

- Put an 'x' next to conflicts.
- Star milestones or happy memories in the song.
- Box examples of parallel structure.

2. Small Group: Use notes from "marking the text" activity to create a timeline for the song "Feel like a kid again."

3. Whole Group Discussion: Use the events from the timeline to define the term "coming to age" using a circle map.

4. **Create a timeline of your life.** Highlight events in your life that opened your eyes to the adult world.

Exit Pass: What begins the transition from childhood to adulthood?

Transition: A key characteristic of maturity is the ability to see another person's point of view. For example, in the short story "Marigolds" by Eugenia Collier, the protagonist, Elizabeth recalls the moment she became a woman when she gained the ability to look beyond herself and into the depths of

another person. As we read “Marigolds,” we will analyze how the author’s use of a flashback helps the reader understand how the protagonist undergoes change.

Day 2-4: Essential question: How does a person come to age?

Learning Target:

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

Reading Skills: Vocabulary Strategy

Literature Skills: Understanding plot

Language Skills: Juxtaposition

Writing Skills: n/a

Objective:

- **Students will understand how point of view and perspective affects the overall meaning of the story.**
- **Students will understand how flashbacks affects the plot and the overall meaning of the story.**
- **Students will find key details in a story to support a given theme.**

Mini-Lessons:

- Plot
- The use of flashbacks
- Juxtaposition

As you listen to the song:

“Don’t You Worry Child” by Swedish House Mafia (Genre: House/Dance Electronic)

Read the lyrics to the song and mark the text where the speaker begins to transition from childhood to adulthood. What began their transition from child to adult?

Quick Write: Choose an event from your life that was an eye opening experience for you where you were first confronted by the adult world. You can use the timeline you created previously to help you think of an event. Describe that event in detail. How has that event shaped who you are today?

Read the text: “Marigolds” by Eugenia Collier

1. Mark the text:

1st read: Mark places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd read: Stop at the places you marked and ask questions or make comments. Also annotate the following items:

- ‘X’ next to conflicts
- Star key events
- Box examples of parallel structure
- Highlight examples of juxtaposition

2. Each small group will be assigned a literary element: plot, conflict, setting, point of view, character or tone.

3. Each small group will find examples of their element in the short story "Marigolds" by Eugenia Collier.

4. Jigsaw activity:

- Group Work #1: Mark the text by identifying your group's assigned element. Discuss how the element relates to the following theme in the story: Coming to age is the loss of innocence and the gaining of compassion.
- Group Work #2: Share with your second group what you learned in group #1.

5. Exit Pass (day 2): Give an example of juxtaposition from the story.

6. Exit Pass (day 3): How does flashback affect the plot?

7. Exit Pass (day 4) How does your group's assigned literary element relate to the theme of the story.

Transition: We learned that the beginning stages of coming to age is the loss of innocence which could lead to gaining compassion or bitterness, depending on how the person responds to hardships. In order for us to understand how we will respond to conflict, we must first understand how a person develops their values because a person's identity is whatever or whoever a person gives their heart to. Our values are shaped and influenced by our relationships and experiences.

Day 5-10: Essential Question: How does a person develop an identity?

Learning Targets:

- **Determine a central idea of a text and provide an objective summary of the text.**
- **Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.**

Reading Skills:

- Paragraph Shrinking

Literature Skills:

- Methods of Characterization
- Allusions
- Symbolism

Writing Skills: n/a

Objectives:

- **Students will use a flow map to chart the character's sequence of development.**

MiniLessons:

- Methods of Characterization
- Allusions
- Symbolism
- Parallel Structure

As you listen to the song:

"Name" by the Goo Goo Dolls (Genre: Alternative)

Quick Write: Think about how names are the beginning development of our identities. The speaker in the song talks about how the pain and struggles in his life has affected the development of his identity. The song repeats the phrase "I won't tell 'em your name." The purpose of this repetition is to increase the emotional feeling of abandonment, loss, and disappointment, but still a strong feeling of love and loyalty toward the person who hurt him. As a result, the speaker is lost and somehow has not quite become a mature adult. Now, think about your name and the development of your identity. Write a response that describes you. Who are you? What events in your life are contributing to the meaning of you?

Read the text: "The Kid Nobody Could Handle" by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

1. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places your marked and make comments or questions.

2. Divide the methods of characterization by groups.

3. Each group will mark the text according to their assigned method of characterization and vocabulary strategy.

4. Exit Pass (day 5): Give an example of parallel structure from the text. How does it affect the story's tone?

5. Exit Pass (day 6): Identify an allusion from the text. How does it lead to the story's theme?

6. Exit Pass (day 7): Identify the change the protagonist and antagonist undergo.

7. Exit Pass (day 8): Jim Donnini's boots symbolized his identity. Identify another symbol in the text and explain its meaning.

8. As you listen to the song:

"My Name Is" by Eminem (Genre: Rap)

Quick Write: How does the speaker in this song relate to Jim Donnini in the short story? Create a chart comparing and contrasting concrete details from the story and the song.

What kind of identity does the speaker in the song have?

What kind of identity does Jim Donnini have in the beginning of the story?

After annotating your answers to the above questions, answer the following question: What have you allowed to define you?

9. Exit Pass (day 9): Use a flow map to trace how the protagonist's development in the story leads to the theme: Identity is formed through relationships with ourselves and others.

10. As you listen to the song:

"The Voices of Spring" by Johann Strauss II (Genre: Classical)

11. Mark the text and identify the main idea of each stanza.

12. Exit Pass (day 10): Describe how the allusion "The Voices of Spring" in the short story "The Kid Nobody Could Handle" leads to this theme: The quality of a person's life is determined by their response to conflict.

Transition: Our values are shaped and influenced by the people closest to us. However, we have the power to choose our path in life. Understanding where we are will help us choose where we want to go.

Day 11-14: Essential Question: What's in a name?

Learning Targets:

- **Determine the central idea of a text; provide an objective summary of a text.**
- **Develop a topic with relevant facts and details.**

Literature Skills:

- Imagery

Reading Skills:

- Summarizing

Writing Skills:

- Organization

Objectives:

- **Students will understand the tradition of name giving and how it influences identity.**
- **Students will research the meaning of their name.**
- **Students will choose a new name for themselves to reflect the person they want to become.**

MiniLessons:

- Imagery
- Get the Gist (summarizing)

As you listen to the song:

[“A Boy Named Sue” by Johnny Cash \(Genre: Country\)](#)

Quick Write: Theme of the Song: Struggles in life have an impact on a person's development. A person can either learn from their struggles and grow past their obstacles or become angry, bitter and emotionally stunted.

Think about your development and growth. What struggles in life have you experienced? Have you grown from it or are you still angry and bitter about it? What can you do to grow into an empathetic and compassionate person?

Read the texts:

- [Names & Identity](#)
- [The Name You're Given as a Child Might Affect the Shape of Your Face](#)

1. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Shrink each paragraph.

- Star the main ideas.
- Underline words that reveal the author's tone.

2. Exit Pass (day 11): Write an objective summary for each article.

Read the texts:

- "My Name" Excerpt from House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
- "Choosing My Name by Puanani Burgess (poem)

1. Mark the the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Highlight the imagery in the text. Determine how the imagery leads to the theme: Family experiences shape and influences a person's identity.
- Paraphrase the poems

2. Exit Pass (day 12): Choose an example of imagery from the poems. Create a depiction of the example.

3. **Research the meaning of your birth name.** Complete the research guide worksheet.

4. Exit Pass (day 13): What is the origin of your birth name?

5. Choose a new name for yourself. **Create a nameplate with your new name.** Include the meaning of your new name and why you chose it. Your new name should reflect the person you want to become.

6. Exit Pass (day 14): How do names reveal a person's identity?

Transition: In addition to the influence from relationships, society shapes and influences our identities too.

Day 15-19: Essential Question: How do our personal experiences shape who we are?

Learning Targets:

- **Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.**
- **Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text creates a desired effect.**

Reading Skills:

- Comparing and Contrasting

Literature Skills:

- Point of View
- Use of repetition in poetry

Writing Skills:

- Writing broad yet distinct main ideas

Language Skills:

- Parallel Structure

- Juxtaposition

Objective:

- **Students will compare and contrast two types of genres of the same narrative.**
- **Students will write a paragraph describing how the author uses a literary technique to achieve his or her desired effect.**

MiniLessons:

- Connecting to Real Life Issues
- Point of view
- Tone
- Paraphrasing poetry
- Levels of Questions

As you listen to the song:

["California Love" by Tupac Shakur \(Genre: Rap\)](#)

1. Draw a T-Chart in your journal. In one column, label it "Watts, Compton, L.A." in the second column label it "My Neighborhood".
2. Click on the link to the lyrics for the song, "California Love" by Tupac Shakur. As you listen, use the T-chart to write descriptions of Tupac's neighborhood. How does he describe the cities in California?
3. Then, in the second column record descriptions of your neighborhood.
4. Lastly, answer this prompt: How is your neighborhood similar to Tupac's and how is it different?

Read the texts:

- Excerpt from *Always Running* by Luis Rodriguez
- Poem: "Race Politics" by Luis Rodriguez

1. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Highlight words that reveal the author's voice.
- Put a star next to the main event.
- Underline imagery and notate the author's desired effect.
- Box examples of parallel structure.

2. Exit Pass (day 15): Give an example of juxtaposition from the narrative *Always Running*. What effect does the author create with this technique?

3. As you complete the quick write, listen to the song:

["Keep Ya Head Up" by Tupac Shakur \(Genre: Rap\)](#)

Quick Write: Yesterday we identified a lot of negative aspects in our neighborhood. What are some positive things happening in our neighborhood?

4. Think about the issues presented in these texts: race, class, gender. What is the character learning that connects to the issue? Create a poster illustrating the issues presented in the texts on one side of the poster. On the other side draw pictures of those same issues presented in your neighborhood.

5. Exit Pass (day 16): How does the issues about race, class, and gender apply to my community?

6. As you complete the quick write, listen to the song:

[“Changes” by Tupac Shakur \(Genre: Rap\)](#)

Quick Write: In our previous lessons, we have identified similarities between our community and the community described in the excerpt from *Always Running* and “Race Politics.” What do you want to see changed in your life, in your school, in your neighborhood? What can you do to make positive changes in your life, in your school, in your neighborhood?

7. Exit Pass (day 17): Give an example of imagery from the excerpt *Always Running* or the poem “Race Politics”. What effect does the author create with this technique?

8. Read the text:

“Scars” by Daniel Halpern

9. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Paraphrase the poem
- Highlight imagery
- Underline diction that reveals tone and mood

10. Develop 3 levels of questions based on the poem.

11. Exit pass (day 18): Take quiz on “Scars.”

12. Fishbowl Activity: Model how to facilitate a group discussion about the poem using leveled questions and the discussion cards.

13. As you complete the quick write, listen to the song:

[“Unconditional Love” by Tupac Shakure \(Genre: Rap\)](#)

Quick Write: After talking about all the problems we experience in our personal lives, our families, our school, our communities, how can we show unconditional love to one another? What do you think needs forgiveness?

14. Exit Pass (day 19): Write a paragraph describing how the author uses a literary technique for a desired effect. You may use examples from Luis Rodriguez, Daniel Halpern or Tupac Shakur.

Transition: Society can negatively influence and shape our identities, ultimately determining our purpose in life. Although coming to age is the loss of innocence, we can choose to allow that loss to transform us into empathetic human beings.

Day 20-35: Essential Question: How do our dreams and expectations shape our lives?

Learning Targets:

- **Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.**
- **Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text creates a desired effect.**

Reading Skills:

- Visualizing
- Vocabulary Strategy

Literature Skills:

- Characterization
- Plot and the use of flashbacks
- Imagery

Language Skills: n/a

Writing Skills:

- Organization
- Building commentary
- Developing a thesis statement

Objectives:

- **Write an explanatory essay describing how the main character comes to age.**

MiniLessons:

- Conflict
- Plotting flashbacks
- Characterization
- Identity
- Theme

Read the text: *Written in the Sky* by Matthew Kaopio (These chapters are assigned as independent reading homework assignments earlier in the unit. Create a daily check-in to monitor how much the students are reading daily to ensure they complete the book by this part of the unit.)

1. Listen to the song:

[“Turn, Turn, Turn” by the Byrds \(Genre: Folk-Rock\)](#)

2. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Highlight repetition
- Underline imagery - What sense does it appeal to?

3. Connect each stanza of the song to events in the book.

4. Compare the theme of the song to the theme in *Written in the Sky* using a T-Chart.

5. Exit Pass (day 20): Write a theme statement for *Written in the Sky*. Students will use this statement to help craft their thesis statement.

6. Essay Prompt: Write an explanatory essay describing how Matthew Kaopio uses two literary techniques to show Ikau's coming to age.

7. Exit Pass (day 21-35): Writing Process checkpoints:

- 1) Blueprint for Essay - Main Idea Statements for paragraph 2-4
- 2) Blueprint for Essay - Main Idea Statements for paragraph 1 & 5)
- 3) Craft Introduction: Write the hook
- 4) Craft Introduction: Write the bridge to connect to thesis
- 5) Peer Edit & Revise Introduction
- 6) Craft Body paragraph 1
- 7) Craft Body paragraph 1/Peer Edit
- 8) Craft Body paragraph 2
- 9) Craft Body paragraph 2/Peer Edit
- 10) Craft Body paragraph 3
- 11) Craft Body paragraph 3/Peer Edit
- 12) Craft Conclusion: Implication
- 13) Craft Conclusion/Peer Edit
- 14) Revise
- 15) Final Draft

8. As you complete the quick write, listen to the song:

["Sailing" by Christopher Cross \(Genre: Pop\)](#)

Quick Write: Think about our essential question: How do our dreams and expectations shape our lives? What dreams and expectations do you have for your life? How should these ideas shape your life?

9. Share your completed draft with your group.

Exit Pass (day 36): What experiences in your life have negatively impacted your dreams and expectations?

Transition: When we decide who we want to be in the face of conflict and dare to aspire to something greater, we can turn our empathy into compassion to heal our world.

Day 37-43: Essential Question: How do author's teach us life lessons through fictional characters?

Learning Targets:

- **Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.**
- **Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text creates a desired effect.**

Reading Skills:

- Consider the title

Literature Skills:

- tone and mood

Language Skills: n/a

Writing Skills:

- Voice and Word Choice
- Narrative structure

Objective:

- **Students will write a poem or a personal narrative describing a coming to age event in their life.**

Mini-Lessons:

- Voice and Word Choice
- Narrative Structure

1. As you complete the quick write, listen to the song:

[“Hope” by Twista and Faith Evans \(Genre: R&B/Rap\)](#)

Quick Write: Hope lives in the future. It is believing in a dream for something better. What are you hopeful for? What are your dreams?

2. Read the text:

“Hope it’s the thing with feathers” by Emily Dickinson

3. Mark the text:

1st Read: Mark the places where you are confused or have questions.

2nd Read: Stop at the places you marked and make comments or questions. Also annotate the following:

- Highlight examples of imagery.
- Paraphrase the poem.
- Underline diction that shows tone and mood.

4. Exit Pass (day 37): Take quiz on “Hope its the thing with feathers”

5. Write a personal narrative or poem that describes a coming to age moment in your life. Use excerpt from *Always Running* and “Race Politics” and “Marigolds” as a model for your narrative or poem. Be sure to include the idea of hope in your writing. (On Demand)

6. Exit Pass (day 38-41): Writing Process Checkpoints:

1. Create a concept web of your identity.
2. From your previous quick write “Sailing” choose 1-2 conflicts that have negatively impacted your dreams and expectations in life.
3. Create 2 examples of imagery to include in your poem or personal narrative.
4. Write a theme statement about hope to build your poem or narrative around.

7. Two class periods to craft poem or narrative.

8. As you complete your quick write, listen to the song:

[Heal the World by Michael Jackson \(Genre: Pop\)](#)

Quick Write: Think about the aspirations you wrote in your previous quick write. How might you turn those dreams into a reality? What would you change in the world to make it a better place so you can live out your dreams?

(This quick write will springboard us into our next unit, designing our “Compassion Project” to serve our community.)

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