TPS Primary Source-Based Learning Activity

Section I

1. **Title of Lesson:** *The Watsons Go to Birmingham- 1963* and Civil Rights Movement

2. **Overview:**

Students will read the novel *The Watsons Go to Birmingham- 1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis. The historical fiction novel tells the story of a loving African-American family, living in the town of Flint, Michigan in 1963. When the oldest son begins to get into a bit of trouble, the parents decide he should spend some time with his strict grandmother, Grandma Sands, Mrs. Watson's mother in Birmingham, Alabama. The entire family travels there together by car, and during their visit, tragic events take place that affect them collectively. Students will learn what it was like to live during this time period by reading the book and analyzing primary sources from that time period.

3. **Learning Goals:**
   - The student will read story *The Watsons Go to Birmingham- 1963* and give written responses to questions before, during and after reading.
   - The student will analyze photographs using the Primary Source Analysis tool to complete this process.
   - The student will analyze primary source text documents using the Primary Source Analysis tool.
   - The student will write a journal entry from the perspective of one of the Watsons.

4. **Time Required/ Duration of Activity:**
   This lesson will take approximately 4 weeks, 20 class periods (45 minutes each).

5. **Recommended Grade(s):**
   This lesson is designed for grade 7.

6. **Subject:**
   This lesson integrated Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum areas.

7. **Credits:**
   Allison Fuhr, Hopewell Memorial Junior High, Hopewell Area School District

8. **LDC Teaching Task: Task 10: (Informational or Explanatory/Definition)**

   How did racism in the early 20th century effect everyday life for African Americans? After researching *The Richmond Planet (Sept. 15,1900)* newspaper on Jim Crow Laws, write a report in which you define The Jim Crow Laws and explain how these concepts impacted American society during this time. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.
Section II


10. Materials Used:
- Primary Source Analysis Tool & Teacher’s Guide
- Computers with internet access
- The Watsons Go to Birmingham- 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis
- TPS Teachers Network

11. Resources Used


Section III

12. Instructional Procedures

Instructional mini task: #1

“Inch by Inch”

- Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
- Draw evidence from informational text to support, analysis, reflection, and/or research.
- Analyze the structure of the text through evaluation of the author’s use of graphics, charts, and major sections of the text.

1. After students read how life is different in Birmingham, Alabama than in Flint, Michigan, the students will work in groups of two to access the primary source: http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/activities/political-cartoon/learn_more.html
2. Using the Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis Tool, students will observe, reflection, and question each image. The following is the link to the Teacher’s Guide: file:///C:/Users/Nick/Desktop/Downloads/psanalysis%20(1).pdf
3. Students will each write 2-3 sentences for each of the five pictures to explain how the images relate to what was occurring during the time period. Students should determine what persuasive techniques are being used in each picture: symbolism, exaggeration, labeling, analogy, and irony.

4. Once students have identified the persuasive techniques that the cartoonist used, select one image and answer the following:
   - What issue is this political cartoon about?
   - What is the cartoonist’s opinion on this issue?
   - What other opinion can you imagine another person having on this issue?
   - Did you find this cartoon persuasive? Why or why not?
   - What other techniques could the cartoonist have used to make this cartoon more persuasive?

**Instructional mini task: #2**

The Jim Crow Laws

- Analyze the structure of the text through evaluation of the author’s use of graphics, charts, and major sections of the text.
- Demonstrate understanding of key ideas and details in literature.
- Draw evidence from informational text to support, analysis, reflection, and/or research.

1. After reading about the Birmingham Church bombing in the novel, the students will work in small groups to read the newspaper, *The Richmond Plant (Sept, 15, 1900)*.


2. After reading the newspaper, students must summarize the Jim Crow Laws.

3. Based on their research of their newspaper, class discussions, and their own research done during class, the students will write a report in which they define The Jim Crow Laws and explain how these concepts impacted American society during this time.

4. Students must write a reference page to include evidence based on research.

5. This assignment will take approximately 5 class sessions.

**Instructional mini task: #3**

The March on Washington

- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Draw evidence from literary text to support, analysis, reflection, and/or research.

1. In *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, the cousins in Alabama travel to attend the March on Washington. They give an account of what they saw and felt that day.

2. After reading this chapter, the students will view the album created in the TPS teachers network:


3. The photos will allow students to view the mass of people who attended the march, as well as, the many different races and ethnicities who were involved. Many students may have a previous notion that only African Americans pushed for civil rights.
4. Each student will write a journal entry from the point of view of one of the Watsons, including the cousins in Alabama.

5. The journal entries must share that character’s perspective of the purpose of the March on Washington. The journal entry should be three paragraphs in length.

Section IV

13. Assessment

At the end of the Instructional mini task #3, the students write journal entries from the point of view of one of the Watsons. I will formatively assess their learning using the rubric on the next page.

I will use the LDC Narrative Teaching Task Rubric from the Template Task Collection 2.0 to assess students writing at the end of the learning activity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextualizing</strong></td>
<td>Shows no understanding of what was going on during this time when the source was created.</td>
<td>Shows little understanding of what was going on during this time when the source was created.</td>
<td>Shows an understanding of what was going on during this time when the source was created and how these events shaped the creation of the source.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical information</strong></td>
<td>Little to no research put into assignment. Several errors on facts.</td>
<td>Few mistakes about the facts and needed more research.</td>
<td>Most information is factual and is evidence based.</td>
<td>All information is factual and is evidence based.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Significance</strong></td>
<td>Little to no understanding of how the Jim Crow Laws impacted American society during this time period.</td>
<td>Shows little understanding of how the Jim Crow Laws impacted American society during this time period.</td>
<td>Shows an understanding of how the Jim Crow Laws impacted American society during this time period.</td>
<td>Clearly writes how the Jim Crow Laws impacted American society during this time period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>More than 4 grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
<td>3-4 grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.</td>
<td>1-2 grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors</td>
<td>No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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