

Native Americans in New England Curricular Project

Title(255 characters or fewer): **Evaluating Fiction About Native Americans**

Grade Level (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12): **7-8**

Subject Area Focus *Math, Science, Social Studies/History, English Language Arts, Performing/Studio Arts, World Languages, Health/Wellness, Other*; List all that apply; if Other, please make sure your description mentions it:

English Language Arts, Library/Information Literacy

Estimated Number of Days to Complete: **3**

Submitted by* Peter Riedel

Additional Creators none

School Amherst Regional Middle School

District Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools

State MA

Date Submitted 7/14/2015

*This lesson plan will be submitted for inclusion into an on-line database of curricular projects for the NEH program Native Americans in New England.

Curricular Project Summary: (Please write a brief overview summary of the curricular project in 150 words or less.)

7th and 8th grade students will learn to use an online database to identify literature about a topic and to read literary reviews by authoritative sources. Students will then compare the reviews of an award-winning book about Native Americans from published sources with a review written by highly regarded Native American academic to understand that there is often more than one viewpoint and that all literature should be read critically. Finally, students will practice finding reviews from differing perspectives using other novels about Native Americans. These lessons will take place during three separate visits to the library during which students learn best practices for selecting literature for independent reading. The lessons will be relatively short since students will also need time to select and check out books.

Desired Results/Objectives

1. Essential Questions/Historical Questions:

What tools and strategies can be employed to evaluate fiction?

2. Objectives: By the end of this project what will students know, understand and be able to do?

Students will know...

- the names of at least two important Native American authors.
- strategies to use when selecting fiction at their reading level.
- sources for finding book reviews.

Students will understand...

- people (including scholars) with different points of view can have opposing opinions about pieces of literature.
- an author's background (including race, ethnicity, life experience, etc.) greatly influences his or her writing.

Students will be able to...

- find literature with desired attributes using the Gale "Books & Authors" database.
- use a database to access book reviews and to select literature for independent reading. apply book evaluation techniques to select fiction that interests them and that is appropriate to their reading level.

3. Curriculum Standards (National, State, Local):

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7-8.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

AASL 4.1.2 Read widely and fluently to make connections with self, the world, and previous reading.

By the end of eighth grade, students will continue to work on previous standards as necessary and will also be able to:

MSLA 4.4 Independently develop criteria for relevant information, including authority, accuracy, objectivity, relevancy, and currency of source.

MSLA 7.7 Use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze, synthesize and evaluate the relevance, reliability, and authority of sources.

MSLA 8.17 Identify and read from a variety of genres, e.g., historical, realistic, fantasy, fiction, folklore, poetry, biography, nonfiction.

MSLA 8.20 Identify award-winning books, their selection criteria, and attributes.

4. Transfer Goal:

Students will be able to incorporate critical and creative thinking skills when evaluating an author's point of view when reading all types of text.

Assessment/Evidence

Performance Task or Assessment used to gauge student learning: (Please describe)

Students will locate and share with the librarian a book review on a title they plan to read from an authoritative source using the "Books & Authors" database.

Students will be asked to read a positive and a negative review about a book and list reasons why the book is recommended and/or why someone should not read the book.

Students will be asked to locate reviews of a book (title provided to them) in the "Books & Authors" database and the "American Indians in Children's Literature" website and write 1-3 sentences telling whether the two sources agree or disagree about the merit of the work.

Pre-Assessment:

Students will be asked to give a thumbs up(yes), down (no) or sideways (maybe/not sure) to voice their answer to the following questions:

- Have you ever read a book review?
- Have you ever used a book review to help you select a good book to read?
- Do experts always agree about whether or not a book is good?

Formative Assessment:

Teacher will circulate among students to check their success in using the "Books & Authors" database.

Students will be able to successfully select and locate books to check out for independent reading.

Other Assessment Evidence:

Teacher can have students raise a hand and use a five finger evaluation to communicate their level of comfort with each task.

Learning Plan

Lesson Summaries: (add lessons if necessary)

Lesson 1: Using an online database to identify literature about a topic and to read literary reviews by authoritative sources.

Lesson 2: Comparing reviews of an award-winning book about Native Americans from published

sources with a review written by highly regarded Native American academic to identify multiple points of view.

LESSON 3: Finding reviews from differing perspectives using a novel about Native Americans.

Learning Activity Details:

LESSON 1: “Locating Authoritative Book Reviews” - Using an online database to identify literature about a topic and to read literary reviews by authoritative sources. (one class – 15-20 minutes for lesson; remainder of time for checking out and reading books)

Materials/Resources Tools:

The Gale online “Books & Authors” database
Computer access of every student or pairs of students
Projector/screen

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions:

Some students will need additional help formulating a search strategy. Asking students to sit next to classmates who are self-identified “techies” often ensures students are able to help one another rather than depend on the teacher or librarian. Demonstrating the database by using titles of books about Native Americans of the Northeast gives the librarian an opportunity to highlight and promote this underutilized subset of the fiction collection.

Historical Question/Essential Question: How can I locate and access authoritative book reviews to help me select literature for independent reading?

Lesson 1 Details

Lesson Opening:

- Students pair-share with a partner strategies they use to select independent reading; volunteers voice their ideas to the group
- Students will be asked to give a thumbs up(yes), down (no) or sideways (maybe/not sure) to voice their answer to the following questions:
 - Have you ever read a book review?
 - Have you ever used a book review to help you select a good book to read?
 - Do experts always agree about whether or not a book is good?
- Librarian asks students to think for a moment where they can find book reviews. Individual students can share their ideas.

During the Lesson:

- Librarian will demonstrate strategies for effectively using the “Books & Author’s” database highlighting simple and advanced searches and the “Who? What? When? Where?” function. Demonstration searches will use a title that all students have read (*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*) and literature about Native Americans from the Northeast as examples (*Daughter of Winter, Ghost Hawk, Hidden Roots, The Sign of the Beaver, The Winter People*)
- Students will practice using the database to find a review about a book they have read in the past, and to practice looking for a new book to read.

Lesson Closing:

- Before moving to the stacks to select a book, students will show the librarian or classroom teacher one book review they located in their search.

LESSON 2: “Identifying Different Points of View” - Comparing reviews of an award-winning book about Native Americans from published sources with a review written by highly regarded Native American academic to identify multiple points of view. (one class – 15-20 minutes for lesson; remainder of time for checking out and reading books)

Materials/Resources Tools:

Copies of Jonathan Hunt’s review, “Ghost Hawk” from Horn Book Magazine
Copies of Debbie Reese’s review, “Susan Cooper on Ghost Hawk” from *American Indians in Children’s Literature* website.
Projector/screen

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions:

Because time is limited for this instruction, the librarian will save time by providing the book reviews for students to compare, but it is important to show that the Horn Book review is easily accessed through the “Books & Authors” database, while the AICL review is only easy to locate if one is familiar with this web resource.

Historical Question/Essential Question:

How does a person’s life experience and point of view influence his or her critique of literature? How does the dominate culture influence opinion?

Lesson 2 Details

Lesson Opening:

- Librarian will give a book talk of Susan Cooper’s Ghost Hawk that includes a brief summary of the work and highlights about the author (Susan Cooper is a prolific British author who won the highest honor in children’s literature, the Newbery Award, for her book *The Grey King* -1976. She currently lives in Massachusetts).

During the Lesson:

- Students will be separated into groups of three and then count off so that each group has a “1” (who will read aloud the *Horn Book* review), a “2” (who will read aloud the AICL review), and a “3” (who will create a “T-chart” to record positive and negative critique about Susan Cooper’s *Ghost Hawk*.
- Librarian and teacher will circulate among the students to help them identify criticism in the reviews.
- Each group’s “3” (recorder) will share out one critique that the librarian will record for all to see.
- Students will work again in their groups to discuss how two book reviews could be so different.
- Each group’s “2” will share why they think a Native American reviewer has such a different opinion about a book that is highly praised in an authoritative review.

Lesson Closing:

- Before moving to the stacks to select a book, each group’s “1” will hand in the group’s T-chart to the librarian.

LESSON 3: “Comparing Native American Perspectives with the Dominant Culture’s Point of View” - Finding reviews from differing perspectives using a novel about Native Americans. (one class – 15-20 minutes for lesson; remainder of time for checking out and reading books)

Materials/Resources Tools:

The Gale online “Books & Authors” database

Computer access of every student or pairs of students

Projector/screen

Copies of the books listed under “Other Curricular Materials” at the end of this lesson

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions:

A primary objective of this lesson is to assess that every student is able to access literary criticism from authoritative sources so, if there is sufficient computer access, every student should have his or her own computer workstation or laptop.

Historical Question/Essential Question:

Why is it important to look for different point of view when critiquing literature?

Lesson 3 Details

Lesson Opening:

- Students will pair/share at least one thing they remember about using the “Books & Authors” database
- Librarian will ask for a pair of volunteers to demonstrate the database to the class.
- Librarian will reteach students how to use “Ctrl-F” To find information, titles, and authors on webpages.

During the Lesson:

- Pairs of students will be given literature with Native American characters. Their assignment will be to use the “Books and Authors” database to find at least one review about the book given to them. Each student will copy the review they locate into a Google document.
- Students will be asked to use the internet to try to locate an alternative review of the book assigned to them. They will start by using the “American Indians in Children’s Literature” website <http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/> and then move to a search using Google if they cannot find a review there. If they have trouble finding a review, they can try GoodReads <http://www.goodreads.com/> to see the opinions individuals who have read the book.
- Students will copy and paste the review they find into the same Google Document as their first review.
- Students will type write 1-3 sentences telling whether the two sources agree or disagree about the merit of the work.

Lesson Closing:

- Before moving to the stacks to select a book, students will email their complete Google Doc (that includes 2 reviews and the sentences with their reflection) to the librarian.

Materials and Sources Used

What primary source(s) is/are being used (full citation)? Please annotate each source.

Native American Institute. *Debbie Reese Part 01 of 02. YouTube*. YouTube, n.d. Web. 12 July 2015.
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlTqCzv7TKg>>.

Annotation: This video clip is from a talk given by the scholar, Debbie Reese (a Nambe Pueblo Indian) at the American Indian Identity Conference held October 16-17, 2008 at Michigan State University.

Students will view two and a half minutes of the talk (from 6:00-8:30) to hear the presenter's criticism of non-native authors appropriating a Native American identity.

What secondary sources are being used (full citation)? Please annotate each source.

Chavers, Dean. "5 Fake Indians: Checking a Box Doesn't Make You Native." *Indian Country Today*. Indian Country Today Media Network, 15 Oct. 2014. Web. 12 July 2015.
<<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2014/10/15/5-fake-indians-checking-box-doesnt-make-you-native-157179?page=0%2C0>>.

Annotation: An article criticizing popular authors who pretend to be Native American.

Hunt, Jonathan "Ghost Hawk." *Horn Book Magazine* 89.5 (2013): 89. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 7 July 2015.

Annotation: A positive review of a novel about a Wampanoag boy. *Horn Book* is one of the most highly regarded sources for reviews of Children's literature.

Reese, Debbie. "Susan Cooper on Ghost Hawk: 'The only major liberty I've taken is...'" *American Indians in Children's Literature*. AICL, n.d. Web. 7 July 2015.
<<http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2013/06/susan-cooper-on-ghost-hawk-only-major.html>>.

Annotation: A negative review of a novel about a Wampanoag boy. This review is written by Debbie Reese, a well-regarded academic who is a Nambe Pueblo Indian woman.

What other curricular materials do you plan to use to support the curricular project?

Young Adult Literature:

Alexie, Sherman, and Ellen Forney. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, 2007. Print.

Annotation: Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Banks, Lynne Reid, and Brock Cole. *The Indian in the Cupboard*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1980. Print.

Annotation: Omri receives a small cupboard as a birthday present and discovers accidentally that with a special key, the cupboard brings plastic figures to life. He brings an Indian figure to life, then expects peace and harmony when a cowboy is added to the equation.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Hidden Roots*. New York: Scholastic, 2004. Print.

Annotation: Bruchac's story takes its roots in the 1930s Native American sterilization program known as the Vermont Eugenics Program. This chilling reality haunted the Abenaki people, threatened their annihilation, and drove them into hiding for three decades.

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Winter People*. New York: Dial, 2002. Print.

Annotation: As the French and Indian War rages in October of 1759, Saxo, a fourteen year old Abenaki boy, pursues the English rangers who have attacked his village and taken his mother and sisters hostage.

Carbone, Elisa Lynn. *Blood on the River: James Town 1607*. New York: Viking, 2006. Print.

Annotation: Traveling to the New World in 1606 as the page to Captain John Smith, twelve-year-old orphan Samuel Collier settles in the new colony of James Town, where he must quickly learn to distinguish between friend and foe.

Collins, Pat Lowery. *Daughter of Winter*. Somerville: Candlewick, 2010. Print.

Annotation: In 1849 Massachusetts, after the death of her mother and brother, twelve-year-old Addie escapes life as a servant by fleeing into the snowy woods. When a nomadic Wampanoag woman takes her in, Addie participates in an ancient ceremony that unravels her past and the mystery of her identity.

Cooper, Susan. *Ghost Hawk*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry, 2013. Print.

Annotation: At the end of a winter-long journey into manhood, Little Hawk returns to find his village decimated by a white man's plague and soon, despite a fresh start, Little Hawk dies violently, but his spirit remains, trapped, watching how his world changes.

Erdrich, Louise. *The Birchbark House*. New York: HyperionBooks for Children, 1999. Print.

Annotation: Omakayas, a seven-year-old Native American girl of the Ojibwa tribe, lives through the joys of summer and the perils of winter on an island in Lake Superior in 1847.

Highwater, Jamake. *Anpao*. New York: Scholastic, 1977. Print.

Annotation: Traditional tales taken from North American Indian tribes woven into one story that relates the adventures of one boy as he grows to manhood.

Howard, Ellen. *The Crimson Cap*. New York: Holiday, 2009. Print.

Annotation: In 1684, wearing his father's faded cap, eleven-year-old Pierre Talon joins explorer Rene-Robert Cavelier on an ill-fated expedition to seek the Mississippi River, but after the expedition falls apart Pierre, deathly ill, is taken in by Hasinai Indians. Includes historical facts.

Lerangis, Peter. *Smiler's Bones*. New York: Scholastic, 2005. Print.

Annotation: In 1897, Robert Peary took six Eskimos from their homes and "presented" them to the American Museum of Natural History in New York as a living exhibit. Soon, four were dead, including the father (whose bones, unbeknownst to the son, were put on display). One returned to Greenland. And the other -- the young boy -- remained, the only Eskimo in New York for twelve years.

Paulsen, Gary. *Woods Runner*. New York: Wendy Lamb, 2010. Print.

Annotation: From his 1776 Pennsylvania homestead, thirteen-year-old Samuel, who is a highly-skilled woodsman, sets out toward New York City to rescue his parents from the band of British soldiers and Indians who kidnapped them after slaughtering most of their community. Includes historical notes.

Smelcer, John E. *The Trap*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006. Print.

Annotation: In alternating chapters, seventeen-year-old Johnny Least-Weasel, who is better known for brains than brawn, worries about his missing grandfather, and the grandfather, Albert Least-Weasel, struggles to survive, caught in his own steel trap in the Alaskan winter.

Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Sign of the Beaver*. Boston: Houghton, 1983. Print.

Annotation: Matt is left alone in a newly built cabin while his father leaves to bring the rest of the family into the wilderness. A wanderer steals his rifle, a bear steals his flour and molasses and he is attacked by bees while collecting honey. He learns to respect the Native Americans as they help him and teach him what he needs to survive. When his father is late in returning, he is invited to go with Saknis and Attean and join their family.

Tingle, Tim. *How I Became a Ghost: A Choctaw Trail of Tears Story*. Oklahoma City: RoadRunner, 2013. Print.

Annotation: Isaac is a Choctaw boy who has become a ghost, and he can see things that haven't happened yet. He and his talking dog, Jumper, and their family learn tough life lessons on the Trail of Tears.

***Annotations from Library of Congress MARC records, Gale Books & Authors, and the respective publishers.**

Reflection

After teaching the lessons, what suggestions do you have for other teachers who might use this curricular project?