“Reminiscent of *To Kill a Mockingbird*...A beautiful book about personal courage.” - The Orlando Sentinel

In the spring of ’51, Reesa and her family’s lives change when, in the middle of the night, there’s a knock on their door. Luther, one of their hired hands, pleads for assistance—he’s looking for his son, Marvin, who was abducted by the Klan. Marvin also worked for the family and was Reesa’s mentor and friend. During the night, Marvin’s body is found brutalized and lifeless. Though the family discovers who is responsible for Marvin’s murder, they are unable to do anything as most of the town is affiliated with the Klan. Over the next year, the Klan becomes more aggressive and bolder and Warren, Reesa’s father, becomes more insistent in his demand for justice. Eventually, Warren ends up working with the FBI to bring about indictments and helping to destroy the Klan in Central Florida.

This unit plan is designed for an 8th grade classroom. The book is 276 pages and divided into 41 chapters, a prologue and epilogue.

- Chapters 1-10: Reesa’s inner struggle to come to the realization that Marvin is dead and nobody will investigate.
- Chapters 11-14: Reesa begins to hope. She meets Thurgood Marshall and Vaylie (her new friend).
- Chapters 15-17: KKK bombings are occurring more often.
- Chapter 18-23: Reesa goes back to school. Life presumes somewhat back to normal. Then Harry Moore is murdered.
- Chapters 24-27: Luther and Warren spend more time fighting for Justice.
- Chapters 28-32: Ren (Reesa’s brother) is shot at by the KKK. Luther helps the FBI by stealing the KKK member list.
- Chapters 33-38: The McMahon family is fearful of the KKK finding out who stole their paperwork. Members of the KKK attempt to hurt the family.
- Chapters 39-41: Warren decides to make a truce with the leader of the KKK. Is Justice served in the end?
THE BIG QUESTION OR ENDURING ISSUE

Big Questions: How can we be the change we want to see in the world? What is Integrity? What is racism and how does it affect society? What can we do to promote justice? How can we avoid stereotypes?

The author strives to illuminate issues of southern racism and individual integrity by employing a plot pervaded with racially charged crimes and circumstances that test characters’ moral choices. The narrator is an adolescent girl, and it is through her eyes that these issues are explored. By choosing this narrative stance, McCarthy’s novel becomes a coming-of-age story, illustrating racial injustice as perceived through innocent eyes.

McCarthy, for the most part, does an adequate job portraying 1950s Florida and the struggles that surround the period. Her novel glorifies characters who promote equality, and villainizes those opposed. She clearly advocates for civil rights. However, some—what can be assumed are subconscious—errors of characterization, prevent this novel from fulfilling what could be a genuinely powerful message. To start, the obvious hero in the novel is Warren McMahon, a white man. Though it is admirable that he would stand up for the rights of his black counterparts, it should not be admired over the efforts of the brutalized black community that continues to fight for justice. Warren’s actions emanate decent humanity; he is brave and kind and full of integrity, but not more so than the brutalized black men and women in his community. Yet their efforts are almost overlooked. To McCarthy’s credit, the black characters in the novel are portrayed as kind and hopeful people. But this is only the beginning of their contributions—they are debased, taunted and abused on all levels, and yet continue to face their adversaries head on. They are both victims and fighters. Despite the near endless trials they face, they have faith in a better world, and it is this faith that helps the white families carry on. But instead of emphasizing their strength, McCarthy chooses to focus on Warren’s ingenuity, which only perpetuates a cycle of racial subordination (i.e., blacks are good, but whites are better). This perpetuation of white over black may escape some students, but that does not lessen the danger—indeed, it may heighten the stakes. If messages of equality are portrayed through stories that subtly promote white power, then equality is, on all fronts, undermined.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

The novel takes place during the 1950’s, so for students to truly grasp the meaning and significance of the story, it would be helpful if they had a background knowledge of the time period that Reesa lived in so that they can make connections between the novel and their own lives. A major theme in the novel is the danger of racism and prejudice. Students should have a clear understanding of what racism and prejudice mean, and that they still exist in society today. Knowing what the KKK is will also help the students in comprehending the novel as well as the dangerous environment in which Reesa and her family are living. Because the novel deals with
fighting for civil rights, there is mention of the NAACP and Thurgood Marshall. Exposing students to this historical information could be an effective before or during reading activity that would enrich the students’ reading experience as well as give them contextual understanding. Aside from the political situation of civil rights, it might be interesting for students to also learn about what life was like for Reesa. In the novel Reesa gets a record player for Christmas, and the family gets their first black and white television set—that is a lot different from what students often have in their homes today. Information about what it is like to live and work on a citrus grove might be helpful to students because much of the plot takes place on the citrus groves of Florida. Also, Jackie Robinson is one of the great heroes for Reesa and her community because of his role as being the first African American player to make it into the major leagues. He is a symbol of hope for the civil rights movement—a theme carried on throughout the novel.

**ISSUES RELATED TO THIS STUDY OF LITERATURE**

**Themes:**

**Grief and tragedy:**

The story begins with the violent death of a citrus grove worker named Marvin. Marvin's death changes everything for young Reesa and her family as they are forced to deal with this sudden tragedy and the cruel knowledge it brings that nothing will be the same again.

**Quotes:**

“The idea of returning to a place [school] where most people's lives have flowed right along uninterrupted by blood-wet bodies and bald-faced lying and bad people doing awful things; the thought of playing Red-Rover-Red-Rover-Can-Reesa-Come-Over as if Marvin’s alive and laughing as he should be, and his poor old parents aren't sitting broken-hearted in their house—"I can't," I cried, “I just can't!” ...it doesn't feel the same when she finally does go. Everything has changed forever (26).

“Caring for a grieving person is best done sideways.” Here the family is talking about how to best help Armetta. (54).

“Oh, Vaylie,” I say, comparing dates, “he died ten days after the party, two weeks before the wedding!” How awful for Great-Aunt Maybelle!” Vaylie exclaims, looking back at the smiling bride to be. “Poor thing, how'd she ever get over it?” “maybe she didn't, Vaylie. Some things, well, some things you never get over” (91).

“Grief, I think, signs you up in a separate, invisible club, members selected at death's awful randomness. 'Gone forever' is our password, lingering sorrow our secret handshake. If you haven't lost someone important to you, you can't begin to know the rules. Truth is, you don't even know the club exists” (92).

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
“Bloom time, which used to be my favorite time of year, is back. For most people, it's the perfumed time of new beginnings. For me, it's the anniversary of Marvin's death. I am in gloom time. And, most certainly, not the girl I was last time the tangerine tree outside my window wore its band of Angel Blossoms. I can never be that girl again, so safe, so sure of everything and everyone. I long to feel that comfortable inside my skin, but I will never be her again” (185).

“Why is it, in this whole mess, ever since Marvin, innocent people are the only ones suffering?” (232).

**Life and Death**
After Reesa witnesses Marvin's death, the whole concept of death becomes completely different to her. Often when someone close to us passes away we realize how precious life is, and how quickly it can be taken away.

Quotes:
“I sit, deliberately opening my eyes to the whiteness, then closing them to the ghostly black; seeing day full of life, then, behind flickering eyelids, trying to imagine death. The idea that life is as fragile and full of holes as a lace curtain terrifies me. The other kids in this room have no idea.” (27)

**Faith vs. Religion**
Everyone is motivated by some set of beliefs or values, and during times of turmoil, those motivations come out. What is true faith? What are the forces that impact our thoughts and actions?

Quotes:
“...Our parents have spent considerable time discussing the difference between Faith--the abiding belief in a Divine Creator that's as plain a part of a hundred-year-old oak tree, or a fiery red sunset, as the nose on your face--and Religion--which is the rigamorale that makes some folks figure they've got a leg up on everybody else” (32).

“I rage at the Rock of Ages who, as far as I can determine, has turned His back on this whole stupid mess called the State of Florida. *When will this nightmare end? And why, WHY is ALL this happening?”*(151).

**Justice and Injustice**
Marvin's death brings into light many of the injustices existing in the small Florida town— injustices that exist all throughout the country. Reesa and her family fight for justice for Marvin and his family, and in their fight they learn about the dangers that they are willing to face for it.

Quotes:

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
“Ah told him Constable Watts says he’s ‘looking into it,’ which is ‘bout like a diamondback wonderin’ where that rattlin’ noise come from” (50).

“Ah’m sorry for you and Ah’m sorry for li’l Miss May Carol and Ah’m sorry that man Marvin lies rottin’ in his grave at age nineteen with cuts on his body and a bullet hole in his head. Ah could never, ever, again work in the house of a Klan member” (64).

“In Heaven, a black man can out-hit, outrun, out-field a white man and live to tell about it. A black man, black as Jackie Robinson, can be picked Most Valuable Player, over hundreds of white men. That ain’t like life, Roo. That’s Heaven on Earth!” (71).

“On its surface, the cove’s as peaceful as a prayer. But nothing is truly as it seems, I know. Not me, not Mayflower, not the whole entire world. And especially not old Miss Maybelle two doors down the road” (99) Here Reesa is wondering about God and the presence of good and evil (100-101).

“I called the Constable’s office last week, also the week before. Constable Watts came, but when I talked, he kept interrupting. ‘Speak English! I can’t understand you!’ he says. Then he shrugs, ‘A little phone call never hurt nobody,’ he’d shrug again and say, ‘It don’t hurt if it ain’t lit.’” (147).

“It [KKK] is founded on the worst instincts of mankind. At its best, it is intolerant and bigoted. At its worst, it is sadistic and brutal. Between these two poles it has its existence. Out of the wells of prejudice, it draws its inspiration. It is a foul pollution in the body politic. It is a cancerous growth that will not be cured until the hand of every decent man is raised against it and the whole power of the law is marshaled to stamp it out” (239).

**Ignorance and prejudice/Judging others/Racism**

Everyone has some sort of prejudice or another. Where do prejudices come from? Many people prejudices that manifest themselves as racism and violence, and most of the time this is because of ignorance and making generalizations. The the poor treatment of African Americans that Reesa is witnessing in her town is a very strong example of unfounded prejudice and judgment—but it must be remembered that those same issues are still evident today.

Quotes:

“I know some folks don’t think much of the Klan,” Mix Sooky, our across-the-street neighbor, called from the sink, “but as a woman, I have to say I sleep better knowin’ the Klan’s around to keep the Nigras from goin’ wild” (38).

“If I was to call you jus’ Warren and Lizbeth, the white folks ‘round here bound to think you’s crazy, and they’d laugh at you and leave you alone. Worse’n that, they’d take a notion that Ah’s getting uppity and that don’t bring nothing but trouble, Ah mean!” (48).

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
“...I was at the station, taking Fred his lunch, when a carload of Nigras pulled in for gas. It was hot, so they piled out of the car thirsty, but, of course, none of them had enough money for Coke-cola so they headed for the water fountain. Fred pointed out the sign, and of course, you never know if they can read, so he told them ‘Whites Only, No Colords!’ Well, that’s when it came to me...a white-only garden without a stitch of color!” (55).

“On its surface, the cove’s as peaceful as a prayer. But nothing is truly as it seems, I know. Not me, not Mayflower, not the whole entire world. And especially not old Miss Maybelle two doors down the road” (99).

“I didn’t think we had any Jew girls at our school.” “Pardon me?” His tone turns my arm trembly...”Well, anybody that advertises three glasses for a dime then tries to charge thirty cents must be a Jew.” (104).

“The Klan’s just keepin’ ‘em in their place. I’m inclined to agree with Mr. Eugene Cox, that Georgia Congressman, y’all know him? He says it’s the hand of Stalin behind these Nigra uprisings” (122).

Judging others: Story of Miss Maybelle and her dead fiance (91-92).

**Enduring in Times of Trials**

Although there are difficult trials and challenges in life, especially when we are fighting for something we believe in, hope can and must endure. Some of the most difficult situations create the best change. Although Marvin’s death brings sadness, it is through his death that people begin to notice the injustice of what is happening in town, and stand up to fight against it.

Quotes:

“God has His plans, honey, for all of us—you, Marvin, me, your mamma and daddy, everybody. And, He gotta prepare us. Time in the fire don’t burn us, y’see, it helps us be ready for whatever’s ahead” (61).

Story of Miss Maybelle and her dead fiancé (91-92).

**Society’s view of children vs. what they are actually capable of**

Even though one might feel too young, too small, or too powerless, everyone has the ability to create change. When we fight for something hard enough, eventually we will be heard no matter what our status is in society. We should never be afraid to stand up for the right thing; even if it is against others that seem to have more influence than we do.

Quotes:

**Bastian, Gull Jensen, BYU 2012**
“‘You two stay up here while the adults talk,’ he tells us curtly and heads down the stairs. Ren and I gape at his back, at each other, in surprise. It’s not like him to exclude us from living room conversation. *Aren’t we witnesses to the conversation at the Lakeview Inn?* I sulk” (77). She is praised for offering evidence (name of waitress) on page 79. Ren also has a gun description for them.

The two girls are discussing some pretty adult topics with deep insight in the attic. They notice and make connections (91).

This is the quote from when Reesa’s mother is mad at her for spying instead of going inside. “It’s about time Mr. James Jameson showed up. And what could he possibly say that would be any worse than what I’ve seen or heard already? I saw what the Klan did to Marvin, same as you. I heard that deputy in Mount Laura tell how it happened. I heard him say how, if Mr. Reed Garnet hadn’t shown up late, Marvin might still be alive. And *I* was the one who had to go make nice at the Garnets’ house this afternoon! It’s not fair for you to treat me like a baby. I’m *not* one--not anymore!” (p. 181).

**Setting**
The story takes place in Mayflower, Florida. It might be helpful to talk to the students about citrus groves and the kinds of work done there, and the types of people that work there, etc. Near Round Lake is where Marvin is found. It is near Casbah groves, which is owned by a Klan member (Mr. Casselton p. 8).
The fishing camp is the headquarters for the Opalakee Klan—the klan responsible for killing Marvin.

**Point of View/Narrative Voice:**
The story is told in 1st person from Reesa’s perspective.

**Characterization:**

**Marie Louise McMahon:** Her nickname is Reesa, or Roo. She is twelve years old, and the narrator and protagonist of the story.

“Seeing that sign, realizing it’s been there forever, I feel suddenly embarrassed. Like I’ve been an ignorant player in an awful game. *Shame on you,* I tell myself, resloving never to drink from that fountain again. And I feel it, the bee sting of *shame on me*” (57). Experiencing the loss of a loved one changes her and makes her see things differently. Pg. 92 is about how she sees Miss Maybelle differently now that she knows that she too has seen death.

**Marvin Cully:** Marvin worked for Reesa's father. He was a mentor for Reesa and her brother, and a dear friend. He was murdered by the klan.
His story of how the bee got stripes and wings (p28)

**Warren (Reesa’s father):** He owns a citrus grove, and is the employer of Marvin and his father. He is well educated, and fights for justice after Marvin's death.

“Daddy's not a large man, but he has the presence of somebody much bigger” (36).

**Miz Sooky:** She is a neighbor that has many prejudices that are often founded in ignorance.

“I know some folks don't think much of the Klan,” Miz Sooky, our across-the-street neighbor, called from the sink, “but as a woman, I have to say I sleep better knowin' the Klan's around to keep the Nigras from goin’ wild”

**Lizbeth:** Reesa’s mother. “In the small constellation of our family, Daddy may be the sun, but Mother is our moon. Hers is the face that lights the night’s shadows” (53).

**Luther:** He raised Marvin.

How he addresses Mr. and Mrs. Warren (48).

**Mitchell:** Reesa’s 4-year-old brother.

**Ren:** Eight-year-old brother of Reesa. He was also very close to Marvin, and loves baseball.

Description (19)

**Armetta:** Marvin's mom. Although she struggles with the death of her son, she is a character that is filled with enduring faith.

“God has His plans, honey, for all of us—you, Marvin, me, your mamma and daddy, everybody. And, He gotta prepare us. Time in the fire don't burn us, y’see, it helps us be ready for whatever’s ahead” (61).

**May Carol Garnet:** She goes to school with Reesa. Marvin's mom Armetta works in her house. Daughter of a klansman.

**Reed Garnet:** Member of the klan.

**Doto (Dorothy McMahon):** Grandmother of Reesa
Maryvale (Vaylie): Grand Niece of Miss Maybelle.

J.D. Bowman: He shot Marvin.

“I didn’t think we had any Jew girls at our school.” “Pardon me?” His tone turns my arm trembly...”Well, anybody that advertises three glasses for a dime then tries to charge thirty cents must be a Jew.” (What if I was Jewish? What would be wrong with that? Also, he has a truck with a gun rack and a confederate flag. p.104)

Other Literary Terms taught in 6th-12th grades:

allusion: there are several biblical/Christian allusions. Marvin is sometimes presented as a martyr or Christ-like character (Reesa’s dream 53, and Easter sermon 45). Page 28 Marvin tells how the bumblebee got stripes and wings. This alludes to the very real situation of how blacks are treated. Greek democracy and registering black voters (97).

imagery: “The sky is bright, bird’s egg blue, cloudless; the sun March-warm, not yet summery hot” (19). “Miss Iris made a face at Miz Sooky’s lumpy old sack-dressed body, reclined headless at the sink, her square-cut hands like turnips, spotted and gnarled from gardening without her gloves on” (38). “Outside, under a bright bowl of spring blue, the world seems soaked with color. Green grass laps like a river around Mother’s island of rosebushes. Pink, coral and scarlet blooms cast a net of fragrance over bright orange butterflies that dip and bob as if tied by an invisible tether” (54).

irony: situational, verbal, dramatic, climatic. “The Easter service had been agony for me. I’d gone unprepared for the effects of the familiar story—the bright young man, so kind and gentle, so gifted at storytelling, the murderous mob, the uncaring officials, the terrible sorrow of his family and friends. Of course, Jesus’ story turned out considerably better than Marvin’s. The rousing finale, Up from the grave He arose with a might triumph o’er His foes, left me sobbing. Miz Sooky Turnbull, sitting in the pew behind us, reached up and patted me encouragingly, heartened, I’m sure, by the hope that I’d somehow blundered my way into salvation. It wasn’t that at all, of course. Jesus rose, a victor o’er the dark domain. Marvin’s dead, gone forever” (45).

onomatopoeia: The sound of Ren playing ball by himself. grieving. (p 70-72).

simile: “A strangeness descended on our house like a winter fog bank” (13). “The De Soto’s engine purrs like a happy cat as Doto backs carefully out or our driveway and noses North to the crossroad” (17) “Her face is like a walrus, fleshy folds wobbling off her chin.” (29) “I watch the two of them, marveling at the way they tiptoe around each other’s pain, like they way your tongue probes yet protects a toothache.” (45). “Ah told him Constable Watts says he’s ‘looking into it,’ which is ‘bout like a diamondback wonderin’ where that rattlin’ noise come from” (50). “Summer’s heat settles on us like a mother hen” (102).
AFFECTIVE ISSUES RELATED TO THE WORK

All students will be able to relate to this work in some regard (whether positively or negatively). The book deals with issues that permeate all lives at some point--racism, death, grief, loneliness, feeling misunderstood, etc. Classes could discuss, for example, McCarthy's portrayal of grief; many of the characters are dealing with Marvin's death, and it could be rewarding to discuss whether or not the students would react in similar or different fashions from the characters, whether the characters' grief is believable, etc. The following quotes could contribute to such a discussion:

{Page 61: Marvin's mother, Armetta, is talking to the narrator about how to respond to loss} “Reesa, lemme tell you somethin’. When Ah was 'bout your age, Ah lost someone, too. My old grandmammma told me somethin’ Ah’ve never forgot. God is the potter, she said, and we clay in his bands, soft and weak which don't do at all. It’s our time in the fire, don’t y’see, that gives us strength and shows his purpose. Without that, we couldn't hold water.”

{Page 141: Reesa, the narrator, describes her mother’s countenance when she finally encounters trials beyond her strength} “And I watched it happen: As if somebody pulled a plug, her brightness fades, her dimple disappears. Only her Poker Face--the careful, studied expression, the hazel eyes that see everything and say nothing--remains.”

And here are quotes that illuminate Reesa's developing comprehension of racism:

{Pages 164-165: Reesa is reacting to a list of demands Armetta has just read} “Nothing, not one thing, on their list seems the least bit unreasonable to me, but the fact that the list exists must mean, can only mean that these things are not currently available because, and only because, of a person's skin color?”

{Page 195: Ren is explaining his careless actions} “‘I thought we were safe,’ he says, meeting my eyes for the first time. ‘Because we’re white!’ He hurls the words at my chest.”

VOCABULARY ISSUES

One nice thing about this book is that many definitions are given in the text by the author. However, some are not explained fully like the NAACP and Thurgood Marshall, so outside study and explanation will help students to understand more about the definition and historical context of the vocabulary. Building a context for this novel before it begins will help students understand the issues present in the 1950s. Below are just a few examples of the vocabulary words that may be beneficial to explain in further detail before and during the novel. The use of slang is also prevalent in this novel, but when read aloud it is not too difficult to understand.

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
Orange Blossom Trail: U.S. Route 441 (US 441) in Florida is a north–south United States Highway. It runs 459 miles (739 km) from Miami in South Florida northwest to the Georgia border north of the Lake City area (Epilogue).

Thurgood Marshall: was an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, serving from October 1967 until October 1991. Marshall was the Court's 96th justice and its first African-American justice. Before becoming a judge, Marshall was a lawyer who was best remembered for his high success rate in arguing before the Supreme Court and for the victory in Brown v. Board of Education. He argued more cases before the United States Supreme Court than anyone else in history. He served on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit after being appointed by President John F. Kennedy and then served as the Solicitor General after being appointed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965. President Johnson nominated him to the United States Supreme Court in 1967 (pg. 2, Chapter 13 “Mr. Civil Rights” (98), Chapter 16, Chapter 20).

NNACP: Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. From the ballot box to the classroom, the thousands of dedicated workers, organizers, leaders and members who make up the NAACP continue to fight for social justice for all Americans (2, 37, 49-50).

Ku Klux Klan: often abbreviated KKK and informally known as the Klan, is the name of three distinct past and present far-right organizations in the United States, which have advocated extremist reactionary currents such as white supremacy, white nationalism, and anti-immigration, historically expressed through terrorism. Since the mid-20th century, the KKK has also been anti-communist. The current manifestation is splintered into several chapters with no connections with each other; it is classified as a hate group (Epilogue, Chapter 1-3, 36, 119, Chapter 16 in broad daylight the KKK chased a car through the middle of town, thinking Thurgood Marshall was a passenger in the vehicle).

dialect: a provincial, rural, or socially distinct variety of a language that differs from the standard language, especially when considered as a substandard (20, 121-122).

“dry Baptist:” entering a Christian religion or congregation without baptism (31).

bivouac: improvised shelter or campsite (30)

valencia Trees: sweet orange trees (102)

polio: viral infection that relates to inflammation; while 90% of those infected have no symptoms at all, 1% of those infected have muscle weakness because the infection enters their central nervous system (12, Warren had Polio before the book begins).

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS OF DIVERSITY

You will have students from diverse backgrounds in every class that you teach. Consider the issues you should address that will honor the variety of cultures and heritages students bring to your class.

Generally, you should start by addressing the stereotypes McCarthy is fighting, and those she is unintentionally supporting. It is important to note that the caricature’s depicted in the book reflect McCarthy’s projection of white and black people at the time, and are not necessarily the interpretations held by a teacher or the class (although they could be the same).

Class discussion could examine the import of the book being written from a white perspective—whether this added to the deeper textual meanings, or detracted. If it detracted, is there anything McCarthy, being white, could have done differently? Is writing only authentic when written from a perspective you know intimately, or can we step outside of ourselves to derive meaning from our world?

GENDER ISSUES

Women are tied greatly to the religious community (bringing food to families when they are struggling). The Women in salon are gossipy and sometimes behind the violence occurring. Many of the women are presented as being ignorant to what is really going on. Example: “Miz Sooky’s not a bad person. She really isn’t. She’s always doing nice neighborly things like bringing over fresh banana bread or sharing home-grown tomatoes. But, like a lot of people around here, she’s got a gigantic, gaping hole in her head when it comes to negroes. Fact is, never once in my life have I seen Miz Sooky that she hasn’t worked in some reference to what she calls their “dark danger to Southern Womanhood” (38). Woman should be treated with respect, and they are by all of the protagonists in the story. Example: Mr. Moore makes sure to thank Lizbeth for the coffee and opening up her home (p. 81). Although women can have an influence in their home, often their husbands will not choose to listen to their point of view, and they would rather avoid contention than bring it up. Example: “Warren, can we talk about this?” Mother pleads. “We’ll talk Later, Lizbeth,” He grits between his teeth. “Right now, I have a couple calls to make” (194). Lizbeth has been worried for quite a while now, but never speaks her mind to her husband, and when she tries he doesn’t listen (194). Although many of the women are presented as being strong characters, there are some that cannot handle the pressures and dangers of the real world. Example: Lucy Garnet can’t handle when her husband is on trial so she commits suicide (230).

RESEARCH ISSUES/PROJECT IDEAS

1. Picture Books: Using picture books about stories of the south during this time period as a pre-reading project of activity would help students get in the mindset of what the feelings were at this time. Gathering picture books of stories taking place in the 1950 southern states would be an engaging way to capture the attention of the class and would help them

   Bastian, Gull Jensen, BYU 2012
prepare for the issues of the novel. Books relating to the relationship of black and white children would show students the similarities and differences between them and those growing up in the south in the 50s. What events occurred then and how they had an effect on the people in that area will help students get the mindset of what it was like for teenagers in this time period growing up in the south.

2. **Documentary:** Creating a documentary film of this time period by comparing and contrasting the novel with historical events. Place students in groups of 3 or 4 (this will depend on the personalities and dynamics of the classroom). Since this is designed for an 8th grade classroom a lot of time will need to be devoted to this project in class. Students will be required to analyze setting of where their documentary will be filmed. Students will also be required to act out key moments of the novel. They will research the time period of the novel and compare and contrast the real events occurring in Florida in the 1950s and the events that take place in the novel. This project will require a rationale as to why students chose certain passages and filming techniques. It will also require research of the time period in conjunction with the literary elements of the novel. You could also do this as a classroom documentary. Assign topics to students before beginning the novel and they are responsible to write a one page paper and then speak for 1-2 minutes on their topic. Show the completed documentary to another class or have a movie day for the students in your class. (For additional information see the article as an example: Bucolo, Joe. “The Bard in the Bathroom: Literary Analysis Filmmaking, and Shakespeare.” *The English Journal* 96:6 (2007): 50-5).

3. **Mock Trial:** Putting on a mock trial where students are characters in the novel and they prepare a case for both sides as if they were charging someone with Marvin's murder. This will allow students to study argument perspective. Students will be given an opinion and they will be required to build a defense based on that opinion. This will give students the opportunity to debate, but will still protect students’ personal opinion since the opinions will be assigned.

**TEXT SETS and Enrichment Resources**

1. **“I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King Jr.**

**Overview:**
This speech was given in 1963, at a time of American conflict between the white and black American people. While this is a popular text to use in school, there is always more to be discussed and learned from this incredibly powerful speech. It was given in Washington DC when the black American people were discriminated and brutally harassed even 100 years after the ending of slavery. Martin Luther King Jr. focuses on the future and the potential Americans have to treat all.

*Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012*
individuals equally. He uses the phrase “I have a dream” to create a powerful message of what he believes can happen if everyone will live by the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

Response:
This speech is a valuable tool to teach the power of words and how a person’s words can be an influence for good. Even though this is well known and studied by students of all ages, there can always be more to learn from it. Especially studying a text set in the southern states in the ‘50s and ‘60s, students can see a glimpse of what life was like at that time. Looking at literary tools Dr. King uses in this speech puts the study of English into the real world because this speech had nothing to do with the study of literature. This speech was written and spoken to create change. Showing students that aspect of language can inspire them to create change as well. This speech can be paired with any novel set in the south around this time and it will show students the many freedoms that they take for granted were not always given to every American in different parts of history.

Lesson Ideas:
1. Begin the class with a free write or journal in response to this quote (part of the lyrics to “My President is Black” by popular rapper, Jay Z: “Rosa Parks sat so Martin Luther King could walk, Martin Luther King walked so Obama could run. Obama ran so we all can fly.” Depending on the class you could potentially play a portion of this song (not the entire thing because of the language, but possibly the verse with these lines. These lines begin at about :46 sec. in the song). After the students respond to this, pass out the “I have a Dream” speech and ask students to follow along as they watch it on YouTube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UV1fs8lAbg&feature=related
2. After listening or reading Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech have students create a collage using pictures that show freedom vs. injustice. They will be thinking of this idea throughout the speech so they should have a good idea of what pictures they could include. After creating the collage, have students write a reflection on how their collage shows the freedom and injustice Dr. King Jr. spoke about in his speech. This will give the students a chance to connect the mediums of speaking and art through their writing.
3. If focusing on literary elements, have students look at all the literary elements Martin Luther King Jr. uses in his speech. Have class discussion on how the literary elements enhance his speech and make it effective. You can also then connect it speech in the novel you are studying and how speech can have a powerful effect on people, both for good and bad.

2. Video clips regarding ignorance:
1. There is a YouTube video that has recently been in the news regarding the ignorance of college students when it comes to black history month, which would be a great tool to begin discussion ignorance and prejudice. On page 38 Reesa talks about an ignorant neighbor of hers who said, “I know some folks don’t think much of the Klan,” Miz Sooky, our across-the-street neighbor, called from the sink, “but as a woman, I have to say I sleep better knowin’ the Klan’s around to keep the Nigras from goin’ wild.”

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
2. Another clip you could use to show ignorance and prejudice in today's world is from the ABC television series called, “What Would You Do?” This clip shows three actors that portray a father's negative reaction to his white daughter dating someone that is black. The hidden cameras show people's reaction to this scene in a restaurant overhearing the conversation.

3. **Video clip regarding permeating stereotypes:**
   To start class, show a portion of the youtube clip, “The Boy Who’s Skin Fell off” and ask that students respond to the following questions in their journals: “What were your initial impressions upon seeing the boy in the video? Did you sympathize with him? Would it be easy to spend a lot of time with him? How would you feel in his situation?”

4. **Jackie Robinson baseball connection book**
   *Promises to Keep* is written by Jackie Robinson's daughter, Sharon Robinson. She writes about the history of Jim Crow laws and what it was like to live in a segregated society, and how her father was a great force in breaking through segregation. The book offers a lot of written information, but is made even more interesting and accessible by the many primary documents and photos included that give the book a historical as well as personal “scrap-book” sort of feeling.

**Response:** Besides giving a historical account of Jackie Robinson and the Civil Rights Movement, there are many underlying themes of hope, endurance, and the dangers of prejudice. Students will hopefully be able to see that things are much better than they used to be, but prejudice still exists today. Jackie Robinson is depicted as a hero type figure, so determining what makes a hero and who our heroes are would also be worth exploring with this book.

**Lesson Ideas:**
- Read the segment in the introduction entitled, “A Black and White World” and show students the pictures in the book. Talk as a class about what prejudices are, and where prejudice can still be seen in society today. Examples: There are many types of prejudices based on religion, socio-economic status, heritage, etc. Prejudices and self-segregation can even be seen in schools (how students divide themselves into various social groups—jocks, preps, nerds, etc.). This discussion can be done through a Socratic seminar, or students can be encouraged to write a small speech or newspaper article that talks about the harm of prejudice.
- In the book there are several letters included between Jackie Robinson and his wife, as well as others. Read a few of the letters as a class and then have the students each write a letter from the perspectives of one of the people mentioned in the book to another person also
mentioned in the book (ex. Jackie to his wife, Jackie's teammates to Jackie, Branch Rickey to Jackie, etc.). Have students focus on “getting into character” and explaining what they think their person would be going through during that time period. This could lead to writing instruction on how to write a letter, addressing the audience, characterization, tone, etc.

• Jackie Robinson is often seen as being a hero. Have students discuss what makes a hero. In class, have them do a little bit of research about a hero (depending on what you want to do, students can choose anyone that they think is a hero, or you can give them names of people that were involved in the Civil Rights Movement). Students can then make posters about their person and what makes them a hero. Posters should have both visuals and writing included. Students could present them to the class or to each other in groups.

**LIST GROUP LABEL PRE-READING INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE**

**Context:**
The *Lay that Trumpet in our Hands* List-Group-Label instructional routine should be considered a “before reading” strategy and be implemented previous to the novel’s introduction.

**Statement of Purpose:**
Students should access a variety of skills from this instructional routine. It promotes a dimensional whole-class discussion that allows students to follow through with several primary listening and speaking standards, while simultaneously preparing students to engage with and construct meaning from a novel that grapples with complex issues of racial strife, integrity, grief, and injustice. Students will be asked to generate definitions related to prejudice and then expand their ideas of those definitions by grouping them with like or dislike terms. By requiring input from every student, the discussion should promote a differentiated contribution of ideas or theories.

**Directions:**

1. Have a sticky note and piece of scratch paper ready for each student.
2. Read the children’s book “Show Way” to the class.
3. Have students generate terms freely associated with the word ‘prejudice’ on their scratch paper.
4. Hand out large sticky notes (one per student).
5. Ask that students write down one of their associated terms on the sticky note.
6. Inform students that they are to put the sticky note with their term on the white board, but are not allowed to put duplicate words on the board.
7. If the word they have written down is already on the board, they must replace it with another term.
8. Once everyone has placed a different word on the board, read through the list.
9. Tell the class that the words must now be organized into separate groups.
10. Begin with a single term; place it to the side and then ask for students to identify linked terms.
11. When students group terms together, ask that they defend their choice of organization. (Why do you think those are linked? Do those terms refer to the same idea? Are both terms a response to prejudice? Are both terms a cause of prejudice? Etc.).
12. Allow students to respectfully debate their desired groupings amongst themselves.

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
Assessment: This instructional routine should be informally assessed. Because its primary intended outcome is to prepare students to thoughtfully interact with complex civil rights issues, students should receive credit for thoughtful participation and engagement.
**Lay that Trumpet in our Hands**, Bantam 2003.

**VOCABULARY WEBS pre-reading INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE**

**Context:**
In the beginning of the novel, the prologue introduces 4 vocabulary words that play a major role in the rest of the novel and are not well-known to many 8th grade students. Studying these four new vocabulary words will help students understand the entire novel and the role these words play in the plot of the novel. This particular vocabulary instructional routine will work best as a pre-reading instructional routine of the novel, but after-reading instructional routine of the prologue (only 3 pages long).

**Statement of Purpose:**
Doing this instructional routine early on in the reading will help students comprehend the remainder of the novel because it will help the students have a better understanding and context of the time period. The purpose of this instructional activity is to help students understand the importance of questioning and finding answers to those questions by using outside sources. As outlined in this particular unit plan, this can also be paired with a Think-Aloud of the prologue (focusing on questioning as a cognitive strategy).

**Directions:**
Main Idea: Students will learn about the KKK, Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP, and the Orange Blossom Trail. Using outside sources, students will learn more about these highly important vocabulary words.

**Materials needed:**

**Time:**
- 30-40 min.

**STEP 1.** Divide the class into 12 groups of 2-3 students and give each group an article and each student a worksheet. (3-4 min.)

**STEP 2.** Each group of will be required to read their assigned article together and draw a web (see attached worksheet), writing all the important information they have learned about their vocabulary word. (12-14 min.)

**STEP 3.** After students read their article and complete the web as a group, students will be placed in new groups (4-5 groups of 6). These groups must have students that all read a different article. (3-4 min.)

**STEP 4.** In the new groups, students will teach the other group members what they learned, using

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
the questions to guide them in their teaching.

a. As each student teaches, the students listening will be required to create a mini-web about each additional vocabulary word using the worksheet as a guide (12-14 min.)

STEP 5. After each student teaches their group they can discuss the things they learned or ask any questions. (extra time)

STEP 6. At the end of the class period students will need to turn in their completed worksheet.

**Assessment:**
The informal assessment occurs as teachers monitor the classroom and listen in on each group's discussion. The formal assessment is the worksheet. This allows teachers to see what students are comprehending both from reading the articles and listening to the students teach about different topics. How much did students write about the article they read? Were they able to summarize successfully or did they include unnecessary information? What did students write about the other topics they were taught? Was the teaching successful or did students learn more from reading? What needs to be done further to help students understand these vocabulary words?
Vocabulary Webs

Directions: There will be several articles read by each group of students about four topics/vocabulary words that we read about in the epilogue of *Lay That Trumpet in our Hands; Orange Blossom Trail, N.A.A.C.P, Thurgood Marshall, and the Ku Klux Klan*. The article you read may discuss one or more of these topics. You are required to fill out four webs: one for each vocabulary word.

Web #1: vocabulary word in the article you **read with your group**. Write the vocabulary word in the middle and any phrases describing it outside. Be sure to have one for each line (creating a web).

Web #2:
Lay that Trumpet in our Hands, Bantam 2003.

PICTURE BOOK JIGSAW PRE-READING INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
This activity would be most beneficial as a pre-reading instructional routine because it gives this novel a historical context for the students. Since the events that take place in this novel deal with issues like racial crime, the KKK, and civil rights, many students will need a context to help them understand the time period. In this unit plan this instructional routine is placed at the beginning before students begin reading the novel.

Statement of Purpose:
A Jigsaw allows students to study about a topic on their own or in a group and then teach what they have learned to other students in the classroom. The way the jigsaw is set up for this novel includes the use of picture books. Students will read about Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, History of the 1950s, or the Bus Boycott. Each of these picture books teaches something about this time period. Students will be required to read and answer questions about what they read. They are then required to teach a small group about what they learned. Through reading, writing, and speaking, this instructional routine will help students learn about the historical context in preparing them to read the novel. This instructional routine will take an entire class period and maybe more depending on the class.

Directions:
Main Idea: Students will benefit from learning more about the time period the novel is taking place. Using picture books that are about the civil rights era of the 50s will help students understand the time period of the 50s which will help them analyze why events are happening the way they are.

Materials needed: Get 2 copies of the 4 picture books chosen for students to read in groups of 3-4. (The four used for this instructional routine are: Boycott Blues: How Rosa Parks Inspired a Nation by Andrea Davis and Brian Pinkney, Rosa by Nikki Giovanni, 20th Century USA: History of the 1950s by Rennay Craats, and The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles). Having two copies of each book will be helpful for students so they can be in smaller groups.

Time: 30-40 min.

STEP 1. Divide the class into 8 groups of 3-4 students and give each group a picture book and each student a worksheet. (3-4 min.)
STEP 2. Each group of will be required to read their assigned picture book together and answer the questions on the attached worksheet. (12-14 min.)
STEP 3. After students read their picture book and answer the questions as a group, students will be placed in new groups of 3-4. These groups must have students that all read a different picture

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
book. (3-4 min.)

STEP 4. In the new groups, students will teach the other group members what they learned, using the questions to guide them in their teaching.
   a. As each student teaches, the students listening will be required to write new things they learn on their worksheet. They will be required to write the name of the picture book and 3 things they learned. (12-14 min.)

STEP 5. After each student teaches their group they can discuss the things they learned or ask any questions. (extra time)

STEP 6. At the end of the class period students will need to turn in their completed worksheet.

Assessment:
The informal assessment occurs as teachers monitor the classroom and listen in on each group's discussion. The formal assessment is the worksheet. This allows teachers to see what students are comprehending both from reading the picture books and listening to the students teach about different topics. How much did students write about the picture book they read? Were they able to summarize successfully or did they include unnecessary information? What did students write about the other topics they were taught? Was the teaching successful or did students learn more from reading? What needs to be done further to help students understand this time period?
The 1950s: What Was Happening Then

Directions: Read the picture book ________________ with your group. There are questions throughout the reading. Stop wherever you see a questions and answer it on this sheet. Write all of your answers on this piece of paper.

1. Who is your picture book about?

2. What did this person do?

3. How did others react to what this person did?

4. What is one thing that is different between the time period we live in now and the time period of the book?

5. What is one thing you found interesting in this book?

Be sure you have enough important information above about your book so you can teach your group successfully.

STOP HERE
about the book you read. As your other group members teach you, take notes in the area provided below.

**Name of Book:** ________________________________

I learned...
1. 

2. 

3. 

**Name of Book:** ________________________________

I learned...
1. 

2. 

3. 

**Name of Book:** ________________________________

I learned...
1. 

2. 

3.
COLLAGE WRITE PRE-READING INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
A major theme of this novel that the students will need to understand is prejudice. The collage write is a pre reading instructional routine that will not only give students a literal definition of prejudice, but it will also help them to make a personal or real life connection with the idea of prejudice, and how it still has a strong effect in society today.

Statement of Purpose:
Creating a collage to answer the question “What does prejudice mean to you,” will allow students to explore new ideas and express themselves creatively about the topic of prejudice. The collage medium will help students make deeper connections, and prepare them to be able to write more reflectively on the topic. Greater personal reflection will make the topic more meaningful and memorable to students, and will be especially beneficial to students that have difficulty in developing and organizing their thoughts for writing.

Directions:
1. Write the following question on the board and read it to the students. “What is prejudice?”

2. Provide students with paper, glue, scissors, pictures, and magazines to take images from.
   Give them time to construct their own collages to answer the question written on the board.

3. After students have finished their collages, have students answer the question (free write) written on the board in their writing notebooks. They should refer to their collage and explain not only what prejudice means to them, but how that meaning is depicted in the collage. Students can also be given sub-questions to help them to come up with ideas (ex. Is prejudice something that can still be seen today? If so, where? What kinds of prejudices exist? What are the results of prejudice? How does it affect your life? Society in general?).

4. Have students share their artwork and responses in small groups. As the groups are sharing together, have them make a list of words inspired by the collages and writing responses that go with the word prejudice (ex. Hate, ignorance, racism, etc.).

5. After groups have had time to finish sharing, have them pick a word on the list to write on the board. Use this list to lead a class discussion and to address the questions mentioned in the writing prompt.
Assessment:
There are formal and informal forms of assessment in this instructional routine. The teacher can monitor the class and listen to the comments given during the group and class discussions. The list of words that groups write on the board will also be indications of how the students define prejudice, and what they are taking away from the discussions. The writing assignment can also be collected so that the teacher can detect the level of understanding that students gained from the instructional routine, and the connections/reflections that they made concerning the topic.
Lay that Trumpet in our Hands, Bantam 2003.

FISHBOWL DURING READING INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
The Lay that Trumpet in our Hands fishbowl activity should be considered a “during reading” strategy and be implemented when students have read to page 169.

Statement of Purpose:
Students should acquire a variety of skills from this activity. The discussion is multi-faceted, allowing students to follow through with several key speaking and listening standards, but also develop writing skills and rapid critical thinking skills. Students will be asked to look beyond the surface level structures to engage in deeper-level thinking, including analysis of character development, critical exploration of stereotypes undermined and upheld by the author, and assumptions harbored by the author and/or the characters. By motivating whole-class involvement, students can learn from each other, and expand their own ideas and approaches to texts. Requiring students to put their analytical reading into words fosters solidification of concepts.

Directions:
1. For homework, have the students highlight portions of the book that illustrate the duplicity of characters (how they are able to harbor both good and bad qualities simultaneously), and portions of the book that are problematic in terms of prejudice, incorrect assumptions, and stereotypes. Make sure students bring their copy of the book along with three questions they have formed concerning their highlighted portions (i.e. “Can Sooky be considered a morally strong character?”).
2. (Classroom Set Up): Set up the classroom with five chairs in the middle, set up in a circle. Set the surrounding chairs up in a larger circle around it.
3. Have four students sit in the inner circle (if your class struggles with discussion, ask students who are likely to volunteer sit in the moderator’s seat). Explain that you will simply be observing and monitoring participation, and that the students will be responsible for steering the conversation in the inner circle. Each student must participate at least twice before they can leave the inner circle. Designate a moderator, and give them a marker (or another object that illustrates their role) to hold or place on their desk. The moderator is primarily in charge of asking questions, but may also participate. They may feel compelled to play the devil’s advocate.
4. Student’s seated in the outer circle should be writing down comments/questions pertaining to the ongoing conversation, so that they feel equipped to participate when they enter.
5. The empty seat in the inner circle is for members of the outer circle to become part of the inner circle. Whenever they opt in, another member of the inner circle (who has already participated twice) must voluntarily leave. If the moderator leaves, the person on their right becomes the moderator and will take the marker.
6. Allow the students free reign of the conversation, with as little involvement from the teacher as possible. Ideally they should have at least fifty minutes of uninterrupted discussion. If discussion goes well, and students want to discuss further, you may want to continue the fishbowl activity.

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
another day.

Possible Questions:
1. Are all the members of the Klan bad people?
2. What’s the definition of a bad person?
3. How would you characterize Sooky? How is she different from other characters in the book?
4. What do you think of McCarthy’s choice in hero? Is Warren the best choice?
5. What did you like or not like about the narrative choice, and why?
6. Do you think we’ve come across the novel’s turning point yet?
7. What are some things you think will happen at the end of the book, and how did you come to that conclusion?
8. What is McCarthy’s focal message?
9. Are the attitudes presented in the novel still present in today’s society?
10. Which character developed or changed the most throughout the book? Why do you say so?

Assessment:
Fishbowl allows students to speak diplomatically with one another, explore themes, and respond to one another verbally and in writing. As such, all aspects should be assessed with a formative assessment. A rubric is attached.
**Individual Fishbowl Discussion Grading Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Student contributed meaningfully to the discussion at least twice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomacy</td>
<td>Student responded respectfully to others’ comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical</td>
<td>Student demonstrated critical thinking ability, developed unique stances and responses, and cited instances from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Student came prepared with three questions and had completed and engaged with the assigned reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
Context:
This activity could be used before, during or after reading, but will be discussed here as a during-reading activity. It could be used at any time in the novel to see how well students are engaging with specific ideas/themes. Here, it will be employed to discuss issues of grief and the way different characters respond to it; students should have read through page 66.

One characteristic of a Chalk Talk, however, is its ability to adapt to different ideas or questions; what might start out as a discussion on grief, could potentially turn into a discussion about racism, depending on how you manage the activity.

Statement of Purpose:
Chalk Talks allow for all students to participate in a class-wide discussion without the added pressure of speaking out, or being criticized. Utilizing the thoughts of all students ensures that the discussion will not be biased to the ideas of only one or two students. Additionally, Chalk Talks promote thoughtful analysis of textual themes or ideas and allow for assessment of comprehension.

Directions:
1. Students should read through page 66 and understand that a class discussion will be taking place.
2. On the day of the chalk talk, relay the following information to students:
   A. Everyone is required to participate. For points, one must comment at least twice.
   B. The discussion is completely silent, and points may be deducted for speaking.
   C. (Point out the following questions written, spaced out, on the board):
      1. “How do different characters in the novel respond to grief?”
      2. “Why might characters respond differently to grief?”
      3. “What are different grief-coping mechanisms characters employ? What do these tell us about the characters?”
   D. You will create a web of thoughts/comments/questions on the board by responding to the prompt questions. If you want to respond to these questions you simply grab a marker, draw a line from the question, and write.
   E. From there, a student may respond to the original question or to the student comment.
   F. I may jump in periodically to pose new questions and you are welcome to respond to my prompt or to the already existing discussion.
   G. Comments must be thoughtful and appropriate and demonstrate your engagement with the text. I will be monitoring your participation.

Assessment:
The activity is, in itself, a type of assessment; students are displaying their levels of comprehension with the novel and ensuing concepts. If students are unable to comment, or their comments are

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
irrelevant, you will know that they are having difficulty with the novel or surrounding concepts. Points should be awarded for thoughtful, engaging comments.
Lay that Trumpet in our Hands, Bantam 2003.

WRITING TO JACKIE ROBINSON DURING/AFTER INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
This activity is a post reading activity. It can be done after students finish the book, but would probably be most effective after students read up through chapter nineteen (p. 134). Doing the activity at this specific place in the novel would allow students to have enough background information on the characters and setting of the novel to help contextualize their learning during the activity. Although there are possibly other resources that can be used for this activity, a possibility is Promises to Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America, By Sharon Robinson.

Book Overview:
Promises to Keep is written by Jackie Robinson's daughter, Sharon Robinson. She writes about the history of Jim Crow laws and what it was like to live in a segregated society, and how her father was a great force in breaking through segregation. The book offers a lot of written information, but is made even more interesting and accessible by the many primary documents and photos included that give the book a historical as well as personal "scrap-book" sort of feeling. Although there are several parts of the book that are valuable for instruction, the letters posted throughout the book are what is needed for this activity. There are several letters included between Jackie Robinson and his wife, as well as other historical figures such as Branch Rickey. Browse through the book and select the letters that would be the most effective for your classroom.

Statement of Purpose:
The novel Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands, depicts Jackie Robinson as a hero and symbol of hope not only for the little town where Reesa lives, but also to all of those fighting for equal rights and treatment for all people. This activity will allow students to get to know Jackie Robinson better, and therefore more fully understand his role in the story, and how it supports many of the overarching themes presented. Students will be required to write a letter to Jackie Robinson from the perspective of one of the characters in the novel. Because of the structure of the writing activity, students will demonstrate their comprehension of characterization, plot, and theme.

Directions:
1. Make sure that students have at least a basic understanding of who Jackie Robinson is and what he did. This can be done right before the activity, or as part of previous instruction.

2. Share with students some of the letters presented in the supplementary text. Either print them off and have students read them in small groups, or go over them as a class either with an overhead transparency or document camera. As these pieces are being read (in groups or as a class) have students discuss the following.
   1. What kind of information is included in the letters?

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
2. What do we know about Jackie Robinson from what he has written, or what has been written to him?
3. What kind of struggles existed for Jackie Robinson in his family?

3. Have students choose a character from the book and write a letter to Jackie Robinson from the perspective of that character. Have them address the following in their letters:
   a. Tell Jackie Robinson a little bit about yourself (the novel character you chose).
   b. Tell about the struggles that you are facing in your town.
   c. What questions do you have for Jackie Robinson? What advice would you ask him for?
   d. What additional information do you think your character would include in their letter?
4. Give students the opportunity to share their letters before they turn them in, either in groups, or as a class.

Assessment:
The product of the activity itself is a form of assessment. The letters that the students write would indicate their level of understanding of not only the plot, but the central ideas of the novel, characterization, and historical context. Also, within the activity there are several opportunities for discussion either in groups or as a full class. The types of comments that students make, and their overall level of participation will also indicate their level of understanding.

KWL CHART AFTER-READING INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
The KWL chart is an instructional routine to be introduced before reading, and continually filled in throughout reading. However, this instructional routine focuses on using the KWL as an after-reading instructional routine. Prior to completing the novel, students should have been given the opportunity to fill out the “know” column and the “want to know column.” At the close of each chapter students can fill out the “learned” column. At the completion of the novel, students should be able to wrap up the KWL chart and have it overflowing with words.

Statement of Purpose:
This instructional routine focuses on finding answers to unknown ideas. It also focuses on being able to critically think beforehand what students want to learn. Students are able to change their focus on what the teacher wants me to learn, to “what do I want to learn?” Students focus on their own learning and the topics they are interested in the novel. This is also a good way for the teacher to learn more about the interests of their students. If some focus on the baseball games in the novel, teachers know those particular students like sports. This instructional routine also shows teachers what students are comprehending and what they may be missing.

Directions:
STEP 1. The first time students should begin their KWL is before and after they do the jigsaw picture book instructional activity that is discussed prior to this one.
STEP 2. Then, depending on time and what areas of the novel a given unit plan is focusing on, have students pull out their KWL chart periodically throughout the reading of the novel at key points on the learning process.
STEP 3. At the end of the novel students should pull out their KWL and review everything they listed under the “want to know” column. In some way this is the time for students to be sure that everything they had under that column is answered in the “learned” column.
STEP 4. After students have their entire KWL filled to the max, assign them to write a reflection on something of value they learned through the process of writing as they read this novel.

Assessment:
The formal assessment is the KWL chart. Throughout the unit teachers can review students’ charts to see what changes may need to be made in helping them successfully complete the necessary information. At the end of the unit teachers may grade the KWL and assess the comprehension of the students reading through the students writing.

Bastian, Gull, Jensen, BYU 2012
**Lay That Trumpet in our Hands KWL Chart**

Directions: DO NOT LOSE THIS PAPER!! WRITE SMALL! 1. Fill in the first two columns as you do the picture book activity and other activities we will be doing in class. 2. Fill in all three columns as we read the novel. 3. Fill in the entire third column at the completion of the novel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you already know?</th>
<th>What do you want to know?</th>
<th>What did you learn?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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DISCUSSION SNOWBALL INSTRUCTIONAL ROUTINE

Context:
This activity is designed to foster creative and reflective conversation within the classroom concerning stereotypes and biases that exist in society today. This discussion exercise can be done as a before, during, or after activity. In this example it is paired with a labeling activity.

Statement of Purpose: The snowball activity allows students to have a fun and safe way to discuss topics with one another. This activity is especially good for those who do not usually like to participate in large class discussions.

Directions:

1. After discussing research and theories on stereotyping, explain that you will conduct a labeling exercise to help students learn about how stereotypes work. Tell students that participation in this exercise is optional, and that anyone who prefers not to participate directly can simply play the role of an observer.

2. Next, attach a label on each student's forehead (or back) so that the label is not visible to the wearer. Make clear that these labels are being assigned randomly and have nothing to do with students' actual attributes.

3. Then ask students to spend 15 minutes talking with each other about "future goals" (another general topic can be chosen, but this one works well in eliciting responses to the labels). Tell students that they should circulate in order to talk with several different people, and that they should treat one another according to the other person's labeled attribute. For example, someone labeled "forgetful" might be repeatedly reminded of the instructions.

4. After the students complete the labeling activity, have them return to their seats and take out a piece of paper. Have them choose a reflection question (it can be one of the questions that you provide, or one that they come up with themselves) and respond to it.

5. After responding to their own questions, the students should all crumple up their papers and throw them at the whiteboard (or some target that you place at the front of the classroom).

6. Have students all go and pick up a “snowball” and return to their desks. Have them respond to the question and/or comment made by the person who started the snowball. After the students have responded, have them crumple the paper up and do the activity again. The number of times this is repeated can vary depending on the goals of the teacher and the value of the discussion.

7. Possible questions:
   7.1. What types of stereotypes exist today? Where do they come from?
   7.2. What kind of stereotypes have you been affected by? How did they affect you?
   7.3. How did you feel while doing the activity? Why do you think you felt that way?

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8. After the snowball activity, have students share what they learned and their overall impression of the stereotype/snowball activity. How does it connect with real life?
9. Have students fill out an exit card with two things they learned, or two new insights they had from the activity and snowball discussion.

Assessment:
The teacher can assess student learning through the group discussion held at the end of class, and by having students fill out an exit card with two things they learned, or two new they had from the activities.

The labeling/stereotype activity was taken from the following sources.
http://www.understandingprejudice.org/teach/activity/labels.htm
## Unit Plan: *Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands*

**Year Theme**

I can influence others for good or bad

**Unit Questions:**

How can we be the change we want to see in the world? What is Integrity? What is racism and how does it affect society? What can we do to promote justice? How can we avoid stereotypes?

**Learning Goals (CCSS standards)**

### Reading Literary Text:

RL.8.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

### Reading Information Text:

RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

### Writing:

W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

6. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

### Speaking and Listening:

SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

2. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

SL.8.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

### Language:

L.8.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Daily Objective and CCSS</th>
<th>Starter</th>
<th>Texts, Literacies, and Discourses</th>
<th>Agenda / Activities / Strategies</th>
<th>Daily Assessment / Framework</th>
<th>Home Work</th>
<th>Date Taught</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RI.8.3.</td>
<td>Journal: Describe a time you've been prematurely judged, or judged someone.</td>
<td>“Show Way” by Jacqueline Woodson</td>
<td>4. Read “Show Way” to class. Have students generate words pertaining to prejudice (free association).</td>
<td>Grouping of labels, class discussion.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>W.8.2. RI.8.3. SL.8.1</td>
<td>Journal: KWL, know section: what do you know about the civil rights? Start want-to-know section.</td>
<td>Several picture books about civil rights era.</td>
<td>4. Jigsaw: in small groups students read picture books and answer questions; then rotate, and teach new group about book (groups write down answers).</td>
<td>How students answer questions and teach group members.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| 3   | W.8.2. RI.8.3. W.8.7.   | Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands | • Collage Write  
• Introduce novel  
• Assign Documentary topic to each student | Collage rationale | Collage rationale | Spend 15 min. researching topic. Turn in note card with notes |            |

**Rationale:** Many issues are brought up in this novel which students in the 8th grade struggle with. Friendship plays a major role in this novel and the question of how important is friendship? And what makes a good friend? Prejudice is also a major issue in this novel that will allow discussion regarding prejudice and judgment towards those different than yourself. This novel also deals with grief, justice, death, and compromise, which are issues that many students in this age group deal with.
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| **4** | **RL.8.2, RL.8.3, L.8.4.** | Journal: Describe a moment when life (or a person) treated you unfairly. | *Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott* by Teresa Celsi | • Think aloud (focusing on questioning): Prologue.  
• Vocab Jigsaw: Orange blossom trail, Thurgood Marshall, KKK, Harry Truman (with graphic organizer). | How students answer questions and teach group members. | NA |   |
| **5** | **RL.8.2, RL.8.3.** | Who do you look up to and why? What would you do if someone hurt that person? | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | 10. Read 1-5  
11. How do you deal with grief? | Discussion, questions | NA |   |
| **6** | **RL.8.2, W.8.7.** | Describe Reesa; would you want to be her friend? Why or why not? | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | Read Chapters 7-9  
CHALK TALK instructional routine | Thoughtful and engaging comments made during Chalk Talk | 2nd note card with topic notes |   |
| **7** | **RL.8.2, RL.8.3.** | Do you agree with Armetta’s saying, “_____”? Why? Pg. 61 | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | Read Chapters 10-12 to the class  
Students read silently Chapter 13 and write a short summary | Written summary | NA |   |
| **8** | **RL.8.2, RL.8.3.** | Pretend you’re Vaylie. Write back to Reesa in response to Maybelle question. | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | Read chapters 14-19  
Making predictions cognitive strategy | Writing predictions to show understanding of reading | NA |   |
| **9** | **RL.8.2, SL.8.1** | Who will the KKK target next? Why do you think so? | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | Read chapters 20-23  
Stereotype Snowball Discussion | Participation in snowball discussion | Generate questions for fishbowl |   |
| **10** | **W.8.2, SL.8.1** | 63-64 quote Reesa to Marvin. Respond. | *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* | Read chapter 24 to class  
FISHBOWL instructional routine | Prepared with questions and participation in the fishbowl discussion | NA |   |
<p>| <strong>11</strong> | <strong>RL.8.2, W.8.7.</strong> | Does prejudice exist today the way it did back then? | <em>Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands</em> | Silent reading day. Read chapters 25-28 and write a response | Relevant response to reading | 3rd note card of topic notes |   |
| <strong>12</strong> | <strong>RL.8.2.</strong> | “What would you do video?” response. | <em>Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands</em> | Read chapters 29-32 to the class | Questions/discussion | NA |   |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>RL, W</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>RL8.2, W8.7</td>
<td>KKK picture and response.</td>
<td><em>Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands</em> Read chapters 33-36 to the class Questions/discussion 4th note card of topic notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>RL8.2, RL8.3, W8.7</td>
<td>Predict story ending.</td>
<td><em>Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands</em> Finish the novel. Read chapters 37-41 Begin draft of documentary topic using the 4 note cards of notes Writing draft for documentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>RL8.2</td>
<td>Was justice served? Why or why not?</td>
<td>Finish KWL 4 corner activity with statements about novel. Completed KWL Participation in 4 corners Finish draft for documentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>W8.2, W8.7, SL8.1, SL8.4</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Documentary Filming Students responsible for 2 min. for their assigned topic Turn in paper on topic Successful completion of documentary paper and filming</td>
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Reflection: Regan Gull

I found the Novelinks project to be tremendously beneficial in terms of both acquired ease with instructional routines and unit planning, and evolution of my personal teaching philosophy. Initially the assignment seemed daunting, but the more I completed, the easier the assignment became. The project continued demanding high quality work, but I felt more comfortable with the material and format as I progressed. Your feedback also eased a lot of my trepidation, as I was able to see exactly what you were looking for in terms of content and voice. The specificity of your comments was truly helpful; I realize this must have taken a lot of time and energy and hope you know it was appreciated!

I find it helpful to script my daily lesson plans and this carried over into planning the instructional routines. Without scripting, it is easy for me to leave out minor parts of the assignment/lesson. Scripting helped me be more thorough and realistic in my plans so I am grateful you recommended a scripted format for the instructional routines.

My personal teaching philosophy matured throughout this process as I realized the absolute need to prepare students for success. When I started writing the instructional routines I did not automatically consider what students would be doing before the activity. Once I incorporated this into the routine I recognized how much the activity was strengthened as a whole; preparing students to learn through stimulated reading, writing, or speaking/listening activities ensured that they were armed with the tools necessary to successfully engage with the activity. If I throw

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students into an activity without preparing them mentally, I cannot expect them to fully and effectively engage the way they could have \textit{with} preparation. Scaffolding applies not only to single activities, but to the way I structure my lessons as a whole.
Reflection: Heidi Jensen

I have always considered myself to be a passionate reader, so it was a very rewarding experience to explore ways to make reading a novel both accessible and meaningful for students. Although it seemed to be quite a daunting task at first, the process of creating this Novelinks project became easier as I began to consider the overall purpose of the project, and the audience that it was directed towards.

Working on this project and coming up with different reading strategies was exciting because it helped me to realize that there are several fun and creative ways to help students read and comprehend literature, and there are also several resources available to teachers. In my own academic career I never really thought about or recognized before reading, during reading, and after reading activities. In most of my classes the pattern seemed to be that we would read a chunk of a novel, and then we would just talk about what we read as a class. Although I had many valuable experiences with reading and discussing literature in this way, I can now recognize that when my teacher presented activities and exercises to help us connect with the literature, it became more meaningful and memorable to us as students.

Trying to find different strategies to teach literature also helped me to realize that not everyone learns in the same way, and that it is important that we present materials in ways that appeal to a variety of learners. The activities in this project give variety to reading instruction, and hopefully help all students connect to the text in one way or another. There are several discussion activities given throughout this Novelinks project. Some of them appeal to students that like to talk and be the center of discussion, like the fishbowl, and some are better for students that might

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not feel comfortable speaking out loud, but still have something to say, like the snowball activity.

Each class has a different personality, and it is nice to know several techniques for teaching discussion, vocabulary, or reading so that I will not only be able to make reading more enjoyable to students, but so that I can also make adaptations when I need to.
Reflection: Emily Bastian

Oh it feels so good when things finally work out! I am just glad my husband has a newer computer that will let me actually edit this humongous document! This was a fun project. It helped that I had two awesome group members that helped with this project. I have always enjoyed group work and it feels good to end the last semester at BYU with a fabulous team. Working with a team definitely makes work more enjoyable and I am so glad I have that philosophy because I know group work is hard for many people. But in teaching, I feel it is extremely important to be able to work with a team.

Focusing on instructional routines for this Novelinks project was very different than other unit plans I have prepared in the past. The instructional routines helped me focus more on what I was doing, rather than just the end goal of what I wanted to accomplish. Rather than focusing on what I wanted my students to do, I focused on how I wanted to do it. For example, with the vocabulary instructional routine, I knew I wanted students to study four vocabulary words in the epilogue. I wanted them to be able to grasp the context in which they were presented. So I put together two instructional activities in order to achieve this goal. I used the jigsaw routine in conjunction with a writing web. Students created one web for each word, but they did one in a group while reading an article and the other three from listening to other students teach them about the three other words. I may just love the jigsaw approach a little too much, but I think it combines writing, reading, and speaking perfectly! And it’s quite easy to do (with a little preparing and color-coordinating paper).

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I am excited for this project to be used by teachers and I hope to use it someday in my classroom. I still don't know for sure exactly what grade I am interning for next year (but I'm pretty sure it will be 7th grade). If it is 8th grade and my cooperating teachers need a book idea I really want to use this one. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and strongly feel like the themes presented in it are themes that students need to learn about and comprehend.

Focusing on the bigger picture at the beginning helped a lot in designing the instructional routines and unit plan. One thing I do want to be better at is focusing on the common core standards in conjunction with the year theme and essential questions of the unit. Rather than planning what I want to teach, and then fitting the standards into that, I want to reverse that order. I understand many of the standards will remind me of different routines, novels, and writing assignments, but keeping the common core in mind will help achieve the goals we have been given as teachers.

Ultimately this project helped me see a glimpse into the future of teaching. I began to picture classes of students as I wrote the directions for the instructional routines. I imagined how the students would respond to the death of Marvin and what they would say to Warren's reaction after his son was shot at. I want students who read this novel to place themselves in Florida in the 1950s. I want students to understand the major issues in play and how blessed they are to not live in that world anymore. Yet, I also want students to realize there are still issues surrounding us and it is our responsibility to be the change we want to see. Because Reesa did create change as a 12-year-old girl, and students that read this novel can create change as well.

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