



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2007 Volume II: Across the Curriculum with Detective Fiction for Young People and Adults

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## **Using Walter Mosley Detective Novels (*Devil in a Blue Dress*) to Motivate Reluctant High School Readers**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.02.01, published September 2007

by Jessica L. Colbert

This curriculum unit will focus on the writings of Walter Mosley. It will center on the whole class reading of *Devil in a Blue Dress*, with the possibility of exploring other Easy Rawlins stories and/or other detective fiction written by African American authors.

This unit will be implemented in a mixed grade level (9-12) special education resource English class in a low-income high school. Included in the class are students with learning and/or emotional disabilities as determined by a psychological report and Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It is my opinion that this unit can be modified and adapted for a regular education classroom as well. Included in this unit is a section for an activity used as an extension for my population of students with learning disabilities. This activity includes examining the notion of double-consciousness in *Devil in a Blue Dress* and subsequent Easy Rawlins novels. This portion of the unit would be very appropriate for any regular or honors education class.

(Developed for English-Learning Support, grades 9-12; recommended for English, grades 9-12)

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