



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

*to strengthen teaching in public schools®*

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2009 Volume II: American Voices: Listening to Fiction, Poetry, and Prose

---

## **The Audacity of Hope for a Hopeless Generation**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 09.02.02, published September 2009

by Marlene K. Cabiness

Today's students appear to lack vision, motivation and aspiration. Society has given labels to those who fail to maintain a certain quality of life and families may have succumbed to these labels. Such labels include, but are not limited to, single-parent homes, male students with learning disabilities, teenage pregnancy, violence, inner city living, etc. Many of these diagnoses are not really disabilities, but a result of the lack of resources necessary to educate the whole child.

With regards to this unit, its primary focus is to build life skills and identify self-esteem issues in students. Although the core is on low achieving African American boys, in many special education classrooms girls, too, face similar challenges. Therefore, the lessons apply to both sexes. Once their skill deficits are identified, students will be able to focus on rebuilding their needs and trust. Students will begin with several questions. 1) What do you see your life like in ten years? 2) What do you want your life to be like in ten years? 3) What is getting in the way? The need to explore concrete steps to turn their wishes into reality is the focal point of the lesson.

(Developed for U.S. History, grade 11; recommended for History and Language Arts, grades 9-12)

---

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit [https://teachers.yale.edu/terms\\_of\\_use](https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use)