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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

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

Civil Rights: Massive Assistance Resuscitated

Guide for Curriculum Unit 09.02.06, published September 2009

by Lynn Pleveich

The unit is designed to teach fourth and fifth grade accelerated and gifted students in Richmond, Virginia the struggle that African Americans endured to gain equality. I plan to teach this unit over the course of the year with the intent of having students invest in their own learning, allowing them to understand how truly fortunate they are to be the recipients of a free public education. It is essential that the students can connect to the material covered and not as distant spectators. This is why I have decided to start with a case close to home, *Davis v. Prince Edward County Board of Education*; one of the five cases consolidated in the Supreme Court's *Brown* verdict of 1954. The students will investigate what led to the student protest at Robert Russa Moton High School and the decision the Prince Edward Board of Supervisors made in response to the *Brown* verdict vowing to close the schools rather than integrate them, from 1959-1964.

The students will study the laws and major Supreme Court decisions that emerged from the Reconstruction Era through the 1960's. Students will use the constructivist approach to learning by using cognitive terminology such as analyze, predict, classify, reflect, synthesize. Differentiated instruction will provide avenues for the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners thus engaging all students in meaningful hands-on activities. The unit could certainly be modified and adapted for use in the upper grades.

(Developed for Gifted and Talented, grades 4-5; recommended for Virginia Studies, grade 4, Language Arts, grades 4-6, and U.S. History, grades 6-7)

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