



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2017 Volume II: Literature, Life-Writing, and Identity

Keeping it Real: Non-Fiction and Identity Formation in Teens

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The formation of identity is challenging for modern adolescents. The challenges of maturing in an era fraught with political tension, racial tension, and fiscal struggle can be stressful and confusing. This unit, designed for 10th grade students, focuses on generating a positive self-image as a result of study which will lead to self acceptance as well as honoring others' identity. The use of non-fiction texts is deliberate, as this affords students an opportunity to successfully engage with high interest texts and learn reading strategies that will help them to find success in college or careers. Text types utilized in the course of this unit include TedTalks, YouTube clips, poems, memoirs, journalism, and essays. The unit has universal appeal as it focuses on names, speech, and being a teenager, but also includes a portion where students select themes that are of special interest to them. Skill in adeptly identifying an author's reason for selecting a specific format and their use of tone and point of view will be developed with an eye to independent critical thinking.

(Developed for English II, grade 10; recommended for English I, grade 9)

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