



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2019 Volume I: Reading for Writing: Modeling the Modern Essay

Right Our World as Writers Who Are Readers: Acts of Resistance in Personal Memoirs and Public Arguments

Guide for Curriculum Unit 19.01.11, published September 2019
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Read. Write. ReRead. ReWrite. *On and on and On 'til the night is gone*. That is how iconic writers like Benjamin Franklin and Frederick Douglass taught themselves how to read and write: *On and on and On 'til the night is gone* (lyrics by Swedish group ABBA). Rooted on the concept of *reading for writing*, this YNI curricular unit utilizes “modern essays” to help students – especially English Language Learners who may rightfully feel marginalized – to write two types of political essays. First, students will read exemplar memoirs. With the support of notebook-keeping and writer workshops, each student will complete a memoir to investigate how sharing who they are could empower themselves and their readers. On a separate route, students together will read, research, debate and write ONE argument about a political injustice such as deportation of children or gun violence in school as they develop a collective voice of readers, thinkers, writers and speakers. Such democratic writing process is akin to how the U.S. Constitution was written and ratified. Throughout the unit, students will read nonfiction essays from *The Norton Reader* and discuss writing tips from *On Writing Well*. Developed for English Language Arts and Social Studies. 4th to 8th grades.

(Developed for ELA and Social Studies, grade 4; recommended for ELA and Social Studies, grades 4-8)

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