

Part II Term Project

Alternative Text Collection

The youth I interviewed was “Aileen”. Aileen is a fifteen year old ESOL student who is not enthusiastic about reading especially when it involves long text. Reading is not a high priority at home however she does see her mother read books in Spanish. The primary language used at home is Spanish. Her major interest at the moment revolves around music—Latin music. For this project, I chose to do a text collection on a topic she will encounter in class until she is way into 12th grade. Motivation to read engaging text seem to be lacking at school and home and for this reason I chose texts that I feel she will be interested because it relates to a point in time when the educational system in America was changing. I feel she might be able to relate to the text and the experiences felt by those affected by the changes that paved the way for her to also enjoy the benefits of having good education. All of the texts are within her reading level and the text formats are not too lengthy.

Perspective of a person of non-white European Background

Walls, C. (2010). *A mighty long way: My journey to justice at little rock central high school.* Reed Elsevier Inc.

This is an engaging book which chronicled the life of the teenager Charlotta as she walked the Little Rock Central High School with eight African-American for the first time. This will take Aileen to a three year journey of the challenges that those nine African-American went through to receive education. This book has pictures accompanied with description and facts which will engage Aileen and will the monotony of just reading. She would be able to relate to the text both as a teenager and a student who is trying to fit in and meet the demands of schooling.

Strategy:

After reading I would ask Aileen to compare and contrast how schools were back in the Reconstruction Era and as it is now using a Venn diagram. This will give opportunity for Aileen

to reflect on the experiences she has now as oppose to the experiences that the author had. Furthermore, this activity will allow her to give her personal take on the things that are prevalent back then and still are today and hopefully encourage her to ask question and extend her learning by trying to find answers to the questions she herself had made. With this activity she will be able to summarize the key ideas from the text she had read.

Bridges, R. (1999). *Through my eyes*. Scholastic Press

This is another book that will let Aileen experience the struggles of African Americans as they bravely went to school amid the negativity that was shown to them and how this did not stop the young girl Ruby from wanting to get educated. This again is a text that will reach out to Aileen because it uses simple text from the perspective of young Ruby. There would be pictures as well that will document the historical facts in Louisiana at that time. There is a Disney television movie on the life of Ruby Bridges that Aileen might also be interested in seeing.

Strategy:

I would locate a copy of that Disney television movie for Aileen to watch. As a post viewing activity, I would have Aileen “chronicle” Ruby’s life by doing a film strip writing project. She can use date lines and use facts and pictures from the book or other sources that will show the experiences of Ruby in Aileen’s eyes.

Perspective of a Woman

Boyle, S. P. (1998). *The Desegregated Heart: A Virginian’s stand in time of transition*.

This book talks about a white American teenager and her “South” upbringing. The book is a good choice because it will show Aileen that people were not necessarily good or bad at that period in time but that there is a historical reason behind the negative feelings that African Americans received back then. This will give plenty of opportunities for Aileen to connect what she has previously learned about the Civil War with what took place in the Reconstruction Era in terms of education.

Sharp, A. W. (2006). *Separate But Equal*. Reed Business Information.

This book will give Aileen the chance to see the effect of school segregation in public schools in the North and South. She will see the lingering effect it has on students who really were the victim of this franchise. Hopefully, this book will renew Aileen's interest in reading more about what transpired between the North and South that led to this attitude and mentality towards educating former slaves. This will further help Aileen establish what she already know about the education in the Reconstruction era.

Strategy:

I will have Aileen make a Synthesis Journal as an activity for both these books. Although the component of class input won't be included, I will modify it to what "Sarah Boyle" says and what "Anne Sharp" says about school segregation. This will encourage a dialogue between me and Aileen as we explore what notes she had written down and also help with her recall and summarization skills. Her synthesis will take into account the different perspective on school segregation.

Newspaper Articles

Williams, A. (2010, February 1). A colorblind America. *Washington Times*.

This is a thought provoking article that challenges the view of Americans on race relation after the election of President Obama. This article includes statistic data that Aileen can relate to math while still touching on the effect of race on education. The article talks about the impact of President Obama's election and its effect—apparent or none—to people's daily lives. It also touches on whether there's any shift or change in people's treatment of African Americans—a topic that Aileen can give opinion to as it relates to her school demographic and the experiences she might have at school.

Strategy:

I would have Aileen plot out the statistical data given and explain the rationale behind this number as she understands it. This will be in the form of a writing log using the data as a reference on how Americans feel about race and how it affects their daily lives. This will give

me a glimpse as to how Aileen uses information to explain her understanding of statistics and of opposing views that was evident in the text read. She will be free to use a computer program to show her data and be creative in the presentation of her work.

Bigg, M. (2009, January 14). U.S. school segregation on the rise: report. *Reuters*.

This will be the article that will literally speak to Aileen because it highlighted the statement that Black and Latino students are increasingly segregated in U.S. schools. The article will touch on the 2007 Supreme Court decision on voluntary segregation and how this will affect schools around the nation. I think this will interest Aileen to find out what this ruling relate to her being of that demographic and how she see it as applies to her school.

Strategy:

I would have Aileen do a modified opinionnaire which will allow her to make a stand on this issue on whether is evident in her school or not and if she feels that her academic achievement in school is influenced by the play of demographics between the student body. This will give Aileen a platform in voicing out her opinion without feeling that she has to be correct and at the same time connect her schemas from previous readings she had to support her stand. I truly feel this will be an engaging activity that calls for awareness on how her life connects to the text.

Websites

Alvarez, C. & Brown, R. (n.d.). *Brown vs. topeka board of education*. Retrieved from
http://www.kawvalley.k12.ks.us/brown_v_board/

This is a good website because it is a real world project made by students from Rossville Junior High in Kansas. It features the important case that set the stage that change the face of public education in the U.S. What's interesting with this website is that though it will cover the typical topic of Brown v. Topeka Board of Education, it will be presented from the viewpoint of students—something that will show Aileen that students' learning and understanding of text is just as important as learning it from what the teacher brings into the classroom. The narrative is written in a story format in short texts that Aileen will have no problem reading. Likewise, it contains interactive thumbs and covered a broad range of subtopic that Aileen can check out as well.

Strategy:

I would like for Aileen to do a K-W-L chart as an activity. Aileen might have the schema about what school segregation is about but I want her to ask questions such as what she will learn from this classic case. I want her to monitor her learning by charting down information as she navigate the website. Another activity that she can do as an outgrowth of the K-W-L chart is a Journal writing on the effect of the Jim Crow Law.

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_segregation.html

This is an interactive website that talks about Teens and Segregation. I feel that this will be something Aileen can relate to especially since it touches on making comparison of what it was like then and now. As a teenager in today's society, it is hard to think how it might be like to have lived in that era and this website will give Aileen that opportunity by momentarily living vicariously through the life of Emmett Till, the central character for this particular segment of the website.

Strategy:

I would make Aileen do a cause-and-effect flow chart of what the Jim Crow Law unraveled in the American public school system. This will help me measure the degree of Aileen's understanding of how the law affected the views and feelings of people from the North and the South towards African Americans. I want Aileen to see the historical basis for school segregation and be able to pinpoint the direct effect it has on education.

Young Adult Novel

Flake, S. (2007). *The skin I'm in.*

This book was chosen to explore the feelings that teenagers of different ethnic background feel as they relate with their friends. This story will take Aileen to look into her feelings and see the connections between her and the character. I think this will help Aileen identify herself more and learn that it does not matter where we come from what matters is that we turn our lives around and reach out to others for help when we need it to become successful.

Strategy:

I would like have Aileen make a feelings chart. This chart will be three fold. The chart will have the positive feelings the character, the negative feeling, and the last column will

contain the action needed to turn things around in the main character's favor. This will give Aileen the chance to make find ways find positive ways she can do when faced with similar situations.

Non-Fiction Book

Stokes, J. (2007). *Students on Strike*.

This book talks about the experiences of an all-black high school in Prince Edward County in Virginia where they staked out a strike in response to the Jim Crow Law. This will give Aileen a glimpse again as to the perspective of the South in terms of educating the black community. This will give Aileen the opportunity to think if these kinds of things (strikes) do happen in our present day school system where students are actively taking part and if so, what are the issues that they mostly battle for.

Strategy:

The book talked about the students taking a stand. For an activity, I would have Aileen do a simple research and some web surfing of any school in the past year or so whose students likewise did a strike. I want her to read and give me a five sentence writing response as to the reason that strike was held and if the students' demands/complaint were valid. This will give Aileen opportunity to look for key ideas, summarize the text and take a stand on the issue.

Comic Book or Graphic Novel

Boyd, B. (2002). *Reconstruction Junction*

This text is a comic book and talks about Reconstruction in a dialogue format. I believe Aileen will be truly interested in it because it's very engaging and contains simple dialogues using easy, lay-man's words. This will give her a general idea what the Reconstruction is all about and why this era is so important to the education system. I want her to see that free education for all had to go through a long journey to where it is right now. I want her to connect to the text as an ELL student who is benefiting from this free public education that at one point in time was not a privilege experience by all students.

Strategy:

I would have Aileen make a web organizer of how Reconstruction affected education. Using key words from the text, I would like her to locate a main idea and branch out with other

topics that came out of her reading. This will help her with summarization and as she chose sort out the concepts that go together.