

Form for Internet Inquiry- Step #3: Analyses of One (or two if you want to provide an alternative text) Expository Text of 5-10 pages on the Internet that Corresponds to Content in your State Standards & Provides the Text & Text Analyses for your Reading-Learning Plan

Information about the Text:

Text Title: "What Was Jim Crow?"
 URL: <http://www.ferris.edu/news/jimcrow/what.htm>
 Publisher or Source: Ferris State University Museum of Racist Memorabilia
 Author: Dr. David Pilgrim
 Last Update: September 2000

Credibility:

This text is from a university museum. Dr. David Pilgrim, professor of sociology at Ferris State University is the author of the text and curator of the museum. I believe that since the text is from a university museum, and a list is on the website of other universities and colleges that use the museum, it is a reputable and respected source of information.

Text Information:

This is an eight page expository article about Jim Crow etiquette and laws from 1877 to the mid 1960s. This text is most suitable for upper grades 10, 11, and 12 for two reasons. First, some of the vocabulary is difficult. Second, some of the content is not suitable for a younger student. For instance, the article does not dumb down the discussion of sexual relations between whites and blacks, or the discussion of lynching and burning.

Standards:

I am listing eleventh grade standards, because this text will be a pre-reading activity for the novel To Kill a Mockingbird, a novel that meets the criteria for eleventh grade study in Alabama (American literature from 1900 to present).

Eleventh Grade Standards from ALSDE Course of Study

C			E		
R	L	V	W	S	P

2. Exhibit the habit of reading for a substantial amount of time daily, including assigned and self-selected materials at their independent and instructional levels.

C			E		
R	L	V	W	S	P

20. Apply specific evaluation procedures to one's own reading, studying, and writing*.

Examples: using a teacher-developed checklist, responding to teacher's comments in a response journal

C			E		
R	L	V	W	S	P

24. Participate constructively in classroom and small-group discussion.

- Listening
- Speaking

C			E		
R	L	V	W	S	P

27. Write for a variety of purposes, audiences, and occasions both formal and informal.

Analysis of Readability:

The Flesch Reading Ease of this text is 47.6. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level is 10.5. I think these numbers are accurate, and the reading level is consistent throughout the text. There are a few difficult terms, but students 10, 11, or 12 grade students should be able to understand the text, and possibly learn a few new terms. I think the teacher can and should make this text accessible to students that may be challenged by the text without altering the text. There is no need to alter the actual text, and I believe doing so is detrimental to the student. Rather than changing “buttressed” to an easier word, the teacher can allow the student to read it, trying to understand the meaning from the context, and then gather the class to teach them the meaning of the new word. The teacher should expand the reader’s vocabulary by leaving the text as it is. Also, simplifying the text may alter the feeling and meaning the reader would get from the text otherwise. Changing “mongrelization” to a simpler word will not have the same meaning or paint the same picture for the reader. The teacher can define difficult terms in the margin before making copies for students to read. The teacher can also stop the reading at various points in the article to have a class discussion about what they have just read. Perhaps the best method would be to have students complete a pre-reading activity in which new and difficult terms are defined.

Analysis of Text Structure:

There are no external text features that directly support the text. Students can go to the main page of the “Museum” and explore other links, but none are directly connected to this text. Nothing within the text really signals a change of pace or subject so the article has to be read straight through. There are no bold signals that show the relationship between features, except simple transition words between paragraphs. A few photos of signs from the time period are included in the text. The photos do not have captions and are not explicitly related to the text near them, but I do not think they are distracting. The photos are small and quick to glance at. I believe the photos can help students connect the text to real life because they can see actual signs that were posted in public places at this time. I also think they are just small and easy enough to read to break up the article for students that don’t like reading several pages of text, but they do not detract from or confuse the text. I do think subheadings could be used to break up the text and signal that a slightly different topic is coming. This could help high school readers follow the text, and make it less intimidating. However, even without subheadings, the text is simple to follow and the bulleted lists make it easy for students to keep up with the concepts and keep facts organized in their minds.

Analysis of Audience Appropriateness:

I think this text will be interesting to students because race awareness and prejudice is still a rampant issue in schools and society today. I believe the students will be interested to know a little history about Jim Crow so they will understand some of the feelings some African

Americans and Caucasian Americans harbor today. The dates in this article bring the issue close to home for students; they can see that their grandparents were probably alive when Jim Crow laws were in effect, and that their grandparents lived during a time of violent riots and lynchings. I believe this article will enlighten these students about some issues they may have questions about, but haven't know who to ask because this can be a touchy subject, and any opinion may be biased.

This first paragraph of this text may activate some prior knowledge for readers, but doesn't really seem designed to do so; it is a very quick overview of what Jim Crow is, when it was, and what was taking place in society at the time. The new information presented in the text can build onto the prior knowledge of the reader, and certainly may correct any prior knowledge. The text is not interactive, but if the reader keeps his prior knowledge in mind as he reads he can make connections and corrections on his own.

The vocabulary will be the main sources of confusion or breakdown for the students. Some of the words are going to be new to many readers, and some struggling readers may not be able to determine the meaning of words using context clues. However, most readers should be able to derive much meaning from the entire text, whether or not they stumble over a few words. The readability statistics confirm that high school students should be able to read the text, and I believe their interest in the subject will give them the needed motivation to plow through the difficult vocabulary. Dictionaries will be available for students to help with difficult vocabulary, and I think my before and after reading activities, and class discussions and clarification will help the students understand difficult parts.

Purpose:

Students will read this text to prepare for the reading of To Kill A Mockingbird. This text will familiarize the students with race relations at the time of the novel's setting. This text will help students activate any background knowledge they already have about Jim Crow, and add new information to their knowledge. Understanding Jim Crow laws will help students understand the situation Atticus Finch is in in the novel, especially legally.

Reading Activities:

BEFORE READING: Students will complete a five-word prediction activity. I will provide a list of five key words from the text on the dry erase board, and instruct them to predict what the words mean. The words are: caste system, inferior, etiquette, lynching, and intimidation. I will clarify unclear or new words. Next, students will each write a paragraph predicting what the lesson will be about, based on the words on the board. They should try to use each of the five words in their paragraphs. I will verbally model what a paragraph may sound like before they write. Finally, students can share their predictions with the class. After this, I will briefly introduce that the lesson is about Jim Crow laws.

DURING READING: Students will brainstorm a list of what they already know about Jim Crow. They will share some of their answers, and I will give them a purpose for reading this article. I will explain that we will be reading To Kill a Mockingbird and that this text should add to their knowledge of the racial and legal situation in society during the time to help them better understand the novel. I will then explain how to complete the during reading "INSERT" activity. As students read, they will insert symbols by words, ideas, or concepts that confirm or contradict what they thought, or anything that is new or confusing. They should write notes in

the margins about what is confusing to them. I will put a page of the text on the overhead and demonstrate how to insert symbols, and what type of notes they should make for themselves. We will pause halfway through the article and complete the post-reading activity. Then students will read the remainder of the article, and complete the post-reading activity again for the second half of the article.

POST-READING: Students will complete “Save the Last Word for Me.” I will give an index card to each student. On one side of the card, students will write one thing from the text that evoked a response, such as something they marked as new, or something that they disagree with or that surprised them. On the other side, they will write their own response to the chosen idea. I will verbally model what I may write on one side, and what my response on the other side may sound like. Students will get into small groups and share what they wrote on the front side of their cards. The group will respond to the idea and the author of the card gets the last word by sharing what he wrote on side two of his card. This is repeated until everyone in the group shares. Before the groups begin sharing, I will verbally model what a small group response to a person’s card should sound like. I will then draw the class together as a whole so they can share responses and ask any remaining questions. For instance, if the group did not discover the meaning of a new word in the activity, I will clarify for the whole class. After this activity, each student in the class should be clearly understand the basic legal and social situation of the time To Kill a Mockingbird is set.

Assessment:

Students will turn in their paragraphs from the five-word prediction activity, the actual text that they marked, and their index cards. They will get a completion grades for each of the activities – five points per activity for a total of fifteen points. To receive all five points for each activity, students will have to demonstrate depth of thought. They cannot write an incoherent sentence just to complete the five-word prediction activity. They cannot simply mark “new” by each paragraph during the INSERT activity and receive full credit. Nor can they get full credit for simply writing a statement like “this is new” on their card; they should say what they think about the fact or concept.