



Tara Fox

An Integrated Unit for 8th Grade Reading

"Social Inequality"



Theme

This unit's intent is to focus on various forms of social inequality. Of course, social inequality has taken many shapes and forms over the past years and centuries, and continues to do so today. So, this unit has chosen a pinprick of the wide variety of literature available to explore this concept.

Literature

Core Readings:

- *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley
- *The Skin I'm In*, Sharon G. Flake
- *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
- *The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton

By design, the core reading selection reflects diversity in genre, author gender and culture, and time period. This demonstrates the range that various forms of social inequality can take.

Supplementary material includes speeches by a Native American chief and civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, a PBS documentary following Malalai Joya, the first woman democratically elected to the Afghan parliament, *The Great Debaters*, selected poems of Langston Hughes, Pam Munoz Ryan's *Esperanza Rising*, an excerpt from the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and so on.

Engaging the Students

Students will engage in audio, visual, and kinesthetic activities to aid in the learning process.

Projects for each core reading: Creating a Frankenstein monster and journaling about the process, creating a "Skin I'm In" poster describing events that have shaped the students thus far, a diorama reflecting the importance of a student-chosen scene from *Animal Farm*, and a newsletter taking on the viewpoints of different *Outsiders* characters. Each project will be presented orally to the class.

Other assignments: literary essays, online message board discussions, student-led book clubs, silent readings, read-alouds, creative writings, oral presentations, poetry sessions, and more.

Assessment

In addition to teacher assessments, students will assess their classmates' progress based on both teacher and student-generated rubrics. Rubrics for in-class discussion groups can be found in Raphael's *Book Club: A Literature-Based Curriculum*.

Helpful Websites:

- Speeches of MLK Jr. <http://www.npr.org/news/specials/march40th/speeches.html>
- Malalai Joya documentary <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/a-woman-among-warlords/introduction/65/>
- Rubrics generator <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>
- Create a teacher website www.myteacherpages.com

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