

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Jacqueline Fleming

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

EDU6710 C15

April 2010

Final Project

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Table of Contents

Goals of Project.....	1
List of Primary and Secondary Sources For use with this project.....	2 - 3
Essential Questions.....	4
Objectives.....	4
Student Prior Knowledge Requirements.....	4
Lesson Plans for Project	
Lesson 1	5
Lesson 2.....	6
Lesson 3	7
Lesson 4.....	8
Assessment.....	9
Resources.....	9
Accommodations.....	9
Reflection of course.....	10 - 11
National History Standards.....	12
Annotated Bibliography.....	13 - 17
Attachment Reading Lists.....	18-19

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 1

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Goals of Project: The goals of this project are two-fold. First, students need an introduction to segregation. This will be done through a three-lesson introduction of segregation. The lessons will consist of an exercise where the students are active participants in segregation, a background on the history of segregation focusing on the Civil Rights Movement, and a discussion on segregation. Segregation can be blatant or subtle. Does segregation still occur today? If so, what can we do to stop it?

The second part of the project deals with reading assessment. After the appropriate background, students will choose a book from the teacher generated list, with the theme of segregation. Students will read their books as part of their weekly independent reading (information will be attached with the lesson). Students will have weekly assessments on what they are reading. The unit will culminate with a presentation/project regarding the theme of segregation.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 2

Primary Source List

The Constitution of the United States of America – the document was and is especially important when it comes to regulating and enforcing segregation and integration.

The Declaration of Independence – helps to support the study of the Constitution.

The Civil Rights Movement Primary Source Kit – visuals, primary source articles and statements that help bring reality to the theme of segregation.

Journalist articles – helps explain what happened during the times of segregation.

Newspaper articles, pictures, cartoons, and music – shows how minorities were portrayed to society.

Secondary Source List

Call to Freedom, Sterling Stuckey and Linda Kerrigan-Salvucci. Textbook used in class.

Us and Them – A History of Intolerance in America, Jim Carnes

A Place at the Table- Struggles for Equality in America, The Southern Poverty Law Center.

Literature – Silver Prentice Hall

Posters (Segregation)

The Rutland Herald and other newspapers as needed

Music from the 20th century

<http://www.historychannel.com>

<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/>

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 3

Secondary Source List (continued)

National Geographic Society

<http://www.loc.com> (Library of Congress)

Book list (see attached)

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 4

Central Questions:

- In what ways did segregation change the United States?
- Why did segregation happen?
- Was separate really equal?
- Does segregation happen in other parts of the world?
- Is segregation still happening today?

Challenge Questions:

- Is it important to be recognized in history?
- Could you work to change an injustice?
- Was it important to have people of all backgrounds work against segregation?
- Why isn't every person who worked against segregation recognized in history?
- How many people are needed to believe in a cause before it becomes important?
- Is all segregation about color?

Objectives:

- Anyone can fight injustice if they work at it.
- Fighting segregation for equality took courage and sometimes led to arrest or injury, even death.
- Ending segregation began with a small percentage of people who made a difference.
- Just because you are discriminated against does not mean you cannot influence change.
- Even if you are not the target of segregation now, you could be some day.

Prior Knowledge:

In order for students to be able to understand and acquire knowledge from this unit, they must have a basic knowledge of The U.S. Constitution. They must know the history of rights through the amendments. They need a working knowledge of the Civil War and its outcome. They need to understand the abolitionist movement. They should have an understanding of Reconstruction and how it almost led to equality. They should have knowledge other groups of people who came to this country and were persecuted because of intolerance.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 5

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Lesson #1

Class: 8th Grade Language Arts
Class Time: 50 minutes

Projected Outcome: Students will be introduced to segregation on a personal level, they will experience it. Discussion will ensue at the end of the lesson.

Class will be a traditional grammar lesson. I will only call on the girls and discipline the boys who do anything wrong, and who try to participate. This lesson could last twenty minutes but I will be aware of sensitivity issues and end early if necessary. At the termination of this lesson, I will ask the students to write a response to the following question:

How do you feel about the class today?

I will give students 5 minutes to write their responses, not giving the boys any leeway still.

Discussion will take place at the end of 5 minutes. I will elicit responses from the girls and leave the boys out at first. After a few minutes, I will elicit responses from the boys. Once they have calmed down, I will explain that they have just experienced segregation. I will define the term (the separation or isolation of a race, class, gender, or ethnic group). I will ask if they enjoyed it. Anticipated responses are no from the boys and possibly from the girls. Did any of the girls feel uncomfortable because of the special treatment they received at the expense of the boys? We will discuss this.

The discussion will culminate with the explanation of what happened. The class has seen the play *Jackie Robinson* at the Flynn Theater in Burlington and I will pull this prior knowledge in to our discussion.

The homework assignment is to go home and talk to the adults at home about the experience in class. Ask adults if they ever experienced segregation or knew of people who did. Discussion of this homework topic will open the next lesson.

CAUTION Make your administrators aware of this lesson in case it is misconstrued by a student or an adult!**

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 6

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Lesson #2

Class: 8th Grade Language Arts

Class Time: 50 minutes

Projected Outcome: Students will discuss their experiences after talking to adults at home. All students will share their experience. Students will gain knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement through pictures, primary source letters and conversations from first-hand accounts.

The Civil Rights Movement Kit is the focus of this lesson. It is full of information that will enhance students' understanding of the events of the time.

After discussion of the previous night's homework (time tbd based on reaction – if the discussion is especially insightful, you might want to plan to do the rest of this lesson another day), the class will break in to groups, equally mixed male/female, to discuss specific topics from the kit. Each group will be assigned a piece of the kit and responsible for reporting out the information they learn. It is important that there be a mix as the discussion will be based on how segregation feels and this will give both sides of the viewpoint.

Groups will present to the class their topic and their findings in relation to the question, *how do you think the people you learned about felt?*

We will reconvene as a group to discuss the essential questions listed earlier:

- In what ways did segregation change the United States?
- Why did segregation happen?
- Was separate really equal?
- Does segregation happen in other parts of the world?
- Is segregation still happening today?

The lesson will close with a homework assignment: Would you be willing to do something that changed a bad situation even if it meant that everyone would be mad at you? Write down the answers and we will discuss tomorrow.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 7

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Lesson #3

Class: 8th Grade Language Arts
Class Time: Block 90 minutes

Projected Outcome: Students will use literature to learn about segregation.

We will discuss the homework from the night before. After discussion, students will read in class *Brown v. Board of Education* by Walter Dean Myers in our classroom literature books. We will discuss how this non-fiction short story shows the theme of segregation.

When discussion is over, hand out the book lists (see attached sheets at the end of this project). Book lists are broken in to high, medium, and lower level reading based on the eighth grade level. At this point in the year (early Spring) you know your students' reading levels and abilities. There are three lists. The teacher determines who gets what list by ability.

Introduce the unit. Explain that we are exploring the theme of segregation. Students can choose the book they want from the list but no two students can read the same book in the same class. Have the books available for the students to peruse. Ask students to do a list of first through third choice. This way you can assign books based on interest and ability.

Explain the requirements and criteria of the unit. Every student needs to read for 15 minutes each night and answer a journal question of the student's choice. Every Friday, we will have an assessment based upon reading and theme (criteria and requirements sheet to be handed out to students is attached).

HW: Read for 15 minutes and write journal entry.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 8

Using Literature to Teach Segregation

Lesson #4
Class: 8th Grade Language Arts
Class Time: Part of Friday class until end of year

Projected Outcome: Students will demonstrate what they are learning about the theme of segregation through the assigned books they are reading.

Each Friday, a reading assessment will be administered to see how the students understand the assigned books and to link the various books to the theme of segregation.

The criteria is as follows:

You are responsible to read for 15 minutes every night, 7 nights per week. Each night, you will write up a journal entry chosen from the list given while reading the book. Each week, an assessment will be due regarding the book you are reading. Since each student will be reading different things at different paces, the assessments will be different for each student. Assessments will be done in class on Friday. Some will be assigned for home. If you are absent on Friday, you will have an at home assessment.

The student will be graded on performance (reading done when expected) and assessment (written work and projects associated with the reading).

If reading is not done when expected or assessments are not done, there is an extra credit option that can be used to improve grades (see attached).

Theses assessments count as 50% of your grade and are added in to the Writing/Projects section of your grade that is calculated for your report card.

We will assess and discuss on Fridays until the end of the unit which should go until the end of the year (approximately 6 weeks).

*** A special note on reading expectations: Before assigning books, do a 15 minute read with students in class. Have them write down how many pages they read in that time. That will be the number of pages per night they will be responsible for.*

Culminating Activity: One final activity that brings all books together to understand the central theme of segregation.

Students will be able to do an independent project that they will design. The project must address the theme of segregation in some form. The project can be a video, play, writing, research, song, and more. Students should choose a project based on their learning style strengths and be prepared to present it or share it in class.

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 9

Assessment:

- Rubrics (see <http://www.rubistar.org> to create your own rubrics)
- Class participation: discussions, questions.
- Journal for book reading entries
- Group work
- Participation in class discussions
- Culminating Project

Resources:

- Computer lab
- Primary and Secondary sources
- Assigned Books
- Flip Cameras

Accommodations:

- Visual cueing
- Use of overhead and whiteboard
- Use of hands-on materials
- Heterogeneous grouping
- Alpha Smarts/computers for keyboarding notes
- Teaching to learning styles (following learning styles inventory)

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 10

Reflection

This year, I have chosen to extend the thinking of students through literature. The class will study and learn about segregation, which we have been touching upon all year. When I say we have been touching upon segregation all year, I mean that I interject information in units we are studying. For example, while learning about the Constitution, I made it clear that the document was created by rich, white men for rich, white men. We learn about Native American removal and westward expansion. We also discuss the events that led to the Civil War.

This is the point where I will introduce the literature unit. Students will be able to explore a variety of novels about segregation. No student will be able to read the same book as another. I decided to do this because I want a global conversation about segregation and I don't want students using other students as a crutch. Being a reading teacher, this unit also gives me an opportunity to use reading strategies while learning content. I differentiated the project so they will be reading books by ability. There will be a list given to students based upon their ability. There will be three lists and I will distribute one to each student based on my knowledge of their ability. They will be responsible for various assessments based upon reading ability, book difficulty, and work accomplished. Therefore, some students will have to reach higher standards than others. I am also going to scaffold this project to give students the opportunity to choose their grade and how much work they are willing to do.

I anticipate the students' reactions to this project will range from enthusiastic to moans and groans. Those readers of the group will be happy while less enthusiastic readers won't be as excited. They will have one month to complete this project. The reading will be done at home as everyone will be reading different books. Right now, I have a reading program in place where students can choose books to read as long as they read for fifteen minutes every night. I will suspend this program and input the segregation readings in its place. I think the students will be ok with this as they are already reading every night.

Originally, I proposed three class lessons of fifty minutes each to show this concept. I ended up with two fifty minute lessons, one ninety minute lesson, and Friday class time for the rest of the school year. I anticipate this project will be a success in that it is integrative of content, it assesses students at their ability level, and it gives students choice. As I write this reflection, this project is just beginning.

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 11

The course this year has been interesting. I thought it was well planned out with good speakers and useful information. As always, so much of the course is the people who attend and this year was no exception. I liked it much better that our group leader was put back in to a more authoritative role and we had clear expectations that could be discussed with him. Speaking of group leaders, Lincoln has always been very good at checking in with us and making sure we were heading in the right direction regarding our projects. The meetings throughout the year focused on book talks, but were also for progress reports on projects.

Finally, looking back at the workload of this course, I know it is worth more than three credits. I have taken three credit courses at Castleton where the week was the course and credit was awarded. I have enjoyed the meetings, but not when assignments were due. This year as last, there was much additional reading required during the school year, a busy time for all who teach. The annotated bibliography is also an additional and unnecessary burden. If this additional work is to continue, which is on top of the project expectation, I think it is worth an extra credit. I don't think I can take this course again based on the amount of work during the school year. I know I am not the first to say this, and many people dropped out last year because of this reason, but I will truly be sad not to do this again. I have school priorities that take up a lot of school year time. Please consider this when making the next set of criteria.

In closing, thank you again for more great historical knowledge, helping me to open my mind to new information, and making me a better history teacher.

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 12

World History Standards (5-12)

Era 9

Era 9 Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

Standard 4: The sources and character of cultural, religious, and social reform movements in the antebellum period

Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

- A. Identify issues and problems in the past.
- B. Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances.
- C. Identify relevant historical antecedents.
- D. Evaluate alternative courses of action.
- E. Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
- F. Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 13

Annotated Bibliography

Bella Abzug An Oral History by Suzanne Braun Levine and Mary Thom.
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

This book explores the various aspects of this amazing woman's life. On a personal note, I was greatly influenced by Bella. I was born in Manhattan and spent the first twenty years of my life in a suburb just north of New York City. Her many feats and accomplishments were presented in the local news just about every day. I was in junior high when Bella was elected to Congress. Her signature hats were but one trademark, we "New Yawkers" knew her by. For us, she was mostly known for her chutzpah, no word in the English language describes it better. So it is with great joy that I read and remembered the things that Bella Abzug did in her life.

The need for equality is what pushed Bella to succeed even where it looked like it would be impossible to do so. Whether it was for women's rights, a cause she lived and breathed until the day she died, or racism, or the creation of Israel, Bella never forgot why she was doing these things. I credit Bella Abzug's influence for my passion for service learning and championing the rights of all, not some. Hilary Clinton said it best, "She never stopped fighting for the whole thing...when women around the world say to me, 'I am the Bella Abzug from somewhere, I know what they really mean is that they will never give up.'" Bella never gave up and her inspiration is still felt around the world as well as in this country.

Mark Twain A Life by Ron Powers. (Free Press, 2005).

I have a hard time recommending books to people. The best I can do is to say I liked it and it was my kind of book. This does not mean that everyone will like my suggestion. The book Mark Twain, A Life by Ron Powers is not my kind of book. First of all, I am not crazy about biographies. Give me a story with the same information and I am happy. I also don't like the author's style. I had a hard time staying on track because of the way he formulates sentences. I also feel that some of the language was more for a scholar of Mark Twain and not your average person with a passing interest. Having said all of that, I didn't come away from this book feeling that I knew more or something new about Mark Twain. It was cool to have the author, a prize winning journalist, speak to us though. That I found quite enjoyable.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 14

Annotated Bibliography (continued)

Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom by William H. Chafe. (Oxford University Press, 1980).

A good reference book for teachers but would doubt middle school could use this as it is written as a more scholarly narrative. I do think the way that it is set up as a social history is interesting and I will pull some quotes to use as primary source event highlighters to add impact to the topic.

All The People: Since 1945, a History of U.S. Book 10, 1945 to 2001 by Joy Hakim (Oxford University Press, 2007).

Now this is a book that I can use with middle school students! It is organized and graphically arranged to appeal to all students. It has pictures that will attract attention and the use of color to separate articles and information is done well. The wording of the chapters, for example, *Some Brave Children Meet a Roaring Bull* chapter 19, will instantly catch the attention of a student. The information is relevant and written to appeal to a middle school student's sense of curiosity. This book is in my classroom for students to use and they have discovered it.

Great Issues in American History, Volume III: From Reconstruction to the Present Day, 1864-1981 by Richard Hofstadter and Beatrice K. Hofstadter. (Vintage Books, 1982).

I can't imagine any but the hardiest of fact-seeking historians who would sit down and read this entire book. I didn't. I have used pieces such as the section on Brown versus The Board of Education, Plessy v. Ferguson, and Andrew Carnegie's Wealth. The table of contents is arranged with great detail so it is easy to find the exact historical information you are looking for. It is a great supplement for primary sources but I would not give this to an eighth grader.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 15

Annotated Bibliography (continued)

Citizen King. DVD. Social Studies School Service (2004).

This DVD is a good presentation of the last years of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I liked the use of primary sources such as original film and pictures, diary entries and letters. The accounts of people that knew him or experienced some form of the Civil Rights Movement helped to explain what a complex man he was. I think this is a good video for class if it were a bit shorter.

Freedom's Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 to 1970 by Lynne Olson. (Touchstone, 2001).

This book shows some of the women who helped the civil rights movement. Many of them are not mentioned in history books, for example, Penny Patch and Septima Clark. This book helped me formulate the question, is it important to be recognized in history? I have added this question as a challenge opportunity for my students in my project. I greatly enjoyed, being a woman myself, reading about the exploits, fears, successes and inspiration of these women. I can use some of this information in my classes but as additional pieces of interest. The book itself is probably still a bit above eighth graders but I could see someone using this as a source for a report on one of these amazing women.

Using Primary Sources in the Classroom, Examining our Past, Understanding our Present, Considering our Future by Kathleen Vest. (Shell Education, 2005).

I won this book at a raffle this summer during class! It has great ideas for hands on projects with specific themes. It has a DVD with primary source pictures from The Library of Congress, various museums and personal pictures donated by families. It is a wonderful resource for eighth grade. It gives a nice introduction on how to use the book and then walks the class through the project. Projects are offered on 4-8 and 9-12 levels. I highly recommend this book to help out with hands on learning.

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 16

Annotated Bibliography (continued)

Bring History Alive! A Sourcebook for Teaching United States History (5-12). NCHS.

Another good reference book. Need I say more?

The Antebellum Women's Movement 1820 to 1860. Unit of study for Grades 8-11 by Susan Leighow and Rita Sterner-Hine from National Center for History in Schools.

An extremely helpful unit of study if you need information on this movement. Again, primary sources are helpful. The pictures from the Library of Congress on pages 36-40 are great visuals to help students understand the Age of Industrialization, and the pictures throughout of the women's rights leaders

Slavery in the 19th Century. A Unit of Study for Grades 5-8 by Jim Pearson & John Robertson

Some very good lessons on slavery for 8th grade. I like the sources used and the questions, which lead students to think and debate. I would like to use the slave lists and Tar Baby in my classroom.

A History of Our Time: Readings on Postwar America by William Chafe (Editor), Harvard Sitkoff (Editor), Beth Bailey (Editor). Oxford University Press, 2007.

I like the articles representing many different points of view. I feel that these could be used in a more advanced grade level than eighth grade. This book would work well in a college course or an AP History high school class where you could present different points of view and compare, contrast, and reflect. Eighth graders are just not there yet. I used this book for background information and nothing more.

Lighting the Way: Nine Women Who Changed Modern America by Karenna Gore Schiff. Miramax, (2007).

It's big! I found this book to be a nice compliment to *Freedom's Daughters* by Lynne Olson. Having said that, I think I only needed one of these books. I like the way the information is organized here and how easily I can find what I am looking for. For

Jacqueline Fleming
HIS 6710
The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality
Final Project
April 2010
Page 17

Annotated Bibliography (continued)

example, if I wanted information on the WIC Program, I could use the index and immediately cross reference Gretchen Buchenholz. This makes this book easy to use in class. If I want to make a point to students, I can look up what I need here and give them information on the topic along with the person or persons associated with that information.

Equality: A History of the Women's Movement in America. DVD. Social Studies School Service, (1996).

I have other videos on this subject and I have to pick and choose what is best in the time allotted. I would use this video only if I had some extra time. Why doesn't someone make a DVD which incorporates more than one theme instead of going so in depth on one topic? I don't want to skim history but I do want students to see the interconnectedness of today and the past.

National Standards for History, Revised Edition, 1996 (NH160). And,
Vermont Grade Level Expectations in History

I enjoy tying in the National Standards and State Standards to see where I am missing anything. I use both.

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 18

Books with Segregation as a Theme

8th Grade Level:

Goin' Someplace Special by Patricia C. McKissack

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles

Freedom Summer by Deborah Wiles

Rosa by Nikki Giovanni

Teammates by Peter Golenbock

The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson

White Socks Only by Evelyn Coleman

Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges

The Watsons Go To Birmingham-1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

Friendship For Today by Patricia C. McKissack

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis

Grandmama's Pride by Becky Birtha

Mississippi Bridge by Mildred D. Taylor

Warriors Don't Cry by Melba Pattillo Beals

Jericho Walls by Kristi Collier

Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years by Sarah Louise Delany

Fight On! Mary Church Terrell's Battle for Integration by Dennis Brindell Fradin

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

Belle Teal by Ann M. Martin

Blue by Joyce Moyer Hostetter

Mississippi Trial 1955 by Chris Crowe

Fire From the Rock by Sharon Draper

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman by Ernest J. Gaines

A Thousand Never Evers by Shana Burg

The Summer We Got Saved by Pat Cunningham Devoto

Hard Driving: The Wendell Scott Story by Brian Donovan

Rivka's Way by Teri Kanefield

Friedrich by Hans Peter Richter

The Avenue, Clayton City by Eric Lincoln

The Harlem Hellfighters: When Pride Met Courage by Walter Dean Myers

Rosa Parks: My Story by Rosa Parks

The Cay by Theodore Taylor

The Last Witness From A Dirt Road by Bill Hunt

Loser by Jerry Spinelli

The Diary of Anne Frank

Jacqueline Fleming

HIS 6710

The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty, Freedom and Equality

Final Project

April 2010

Page 19

Books with Segregation as a Theme

Easier Reading:

Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli

Remember: The Journey to School Integration by Toni Morrison

The Red Rose Box by Brenda Woods

Yankee Girl by Mary Ann Rodman

Rosa Parks by Keith Brandt

Abby Takes a Stand by Patricia McKissak

The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain by Peter Sis

The Empty Schoolhouse by Natalie Savage Carlson

Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki

Osceola: Memories of a Sharecropper's Daughter by Alan Govenar

Heroes of America: Martin Luther King, Jr. by Herb Boyd

Satchel Paige: Don't Look Back by David A. Adler

Challenging Reading (content and/or reading level):

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

Black Like Me by John Howard Griffin

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

My Mother the Cheerleader by Robert Sharenow

Kaffir Boy: An Autobiography by Mark Mathabane

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Coming of Age in Mississippi by Anne Moody

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton

The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X

Pig Candy: Taking My Father South, Taking My Father Home by Lise Funderburg