

Instructional Lesson Plan English Language Arts

Grade: 10 **Unit Title:** The Journey for Social Justice

Lesson One Overview

This lesson, which requires multiple class periods to complete, focuses on a close reading and analysis of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The goal of this lesson is to read a text closely in order to determine the central idea and how it is developed over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details. Additionally, students read to determine the meaning of words as they are used and developed in specific segments of the text and analyze the writer’s use of specific rhetorical devices and the cumulative impact of precise word choice on the meaning and tone of the piece. Initially, the teacher models a close reading of the seminal U.S. document, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” in order to demonstrate how to determine the author’s purpose and the central idea of the text. Subsequently, students participate in small group discussions on the central idea of Dr. King’s letter and the evidence that supports it throughout the text. While all students will analyze how Dr. King crafts his language throughout the text, the student group tasks can be differentiated so that one group analyzes Dr. King’s use of rhetorical devices and their purpose, and the second group analyzes how word choice creates tone and reveals the purpose of the text. Finally, the student groups present their findings to the whole class.

NOTE: This lesson has been adapted from a [Teachingchannel.org](http://www.teachingchannel.org) lesson entitled *Evidence and Arguments: Multiple Ways of Experiencing a Text*. To view the instructional video of the lesson, click on the link below:

[https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/literacy-analysis-lesson?utm_source=Alpha+List&utm_campaign=d245033d36-Newsletter June30 2012&utm_medium=email](https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/literacy-analysis-lesson?utm_source=Alpha+List&utm_campaign=d245033d36-Newsletter+June30+2012&utm_medium=email)

Teacher Planning and Preparation

- Apply appropriate elements of UDL, e.g., use an audio version of the text, provide visual representations for any pre-assessment activities, and for the close reading of the text, provide checklists for multi-step tasks, group students deliberately to provide scaffolded responsibilities. (See <http://www.cast.org/udl/> for more information on UDL.)
- Consider the need for Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) when selecting texts and/or novels (or excerpts) for this lesson.
- Locate the text of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” in an English anthology or download it from http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html or <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=943>
- Consider the need for captioned/described video when selecting video or other media for this unit or lesson. See “Sources for Accessible Media” for suggestions.
- Apply WIDA Performance Definitions and CAN DO Descriptors to differentiate the lesson for English Language Learners. (See <http://wida.us/> for more information.)
- Apply enrichment strategies to extend the lesson for advanced students, e.g., analyze, in more depth, the effectiveness of the use of rhetorical devices in the text [RI.9-10.6.]; analyze how other documents (see supporting texts) address related themes and concepts [RI.9-10.9.]
- Analyze the lesson for strategic placement of formative assessments. Anticipate modifications based on data from formative assessments.
- Prepare all materials, including copies of all of the texts, worksheets and/or organizers.
- Consider supplementing the lesson by providing visuals (pictures, concrete items) and written information on the civil rights movement/Jim Crow Laws, etc.
- Depending on student need and knowledge, consider supplementing the lesson by directing targeted instruction on main idea, tone, figurative language, and rhetorical devices.
- Practice a close reading of the text to identify key words, images, and structural features. Additionally, identify the rhetorical elements and specific word choices that reveal the author’s purpose and overall meaning. Script close reading as needed.
- Craft text-dependent close reading questions (see model and information at <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Guide-AnalyticReading.pdf>) and prepare responses to all of the text-dependent questions.
- Evaluate student understanding of Dr. King’s ideas based on their *Meta-cognitive Markers* on the text (see *pre-assessment*)
- Select a section of the text to use to model close reading. Script a “Think Aloud” as needed and practice the “Think Aloud” of the close reading of the text.
- Differentiate the text of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and possibly the related questions by scaffolding for less-able students.
- Organize students appropriately for the small-group discussions and presentations.
- Provide students in need of instructional modifications a modified graphic organizer

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Essential Question for the Unit

What is the basis for the belief that justice will ultimately prevail in American society?

Unit Standards Applicable to This Lesson

Reading Information

RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.9-10.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.9-10.3. Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

RI.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

RI.9-10.5. Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

RI.9-10.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

RI.9-10.9. Analyze seminal U. S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

RI.9-10.10. By the end of grade 10 read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing

W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.9-10.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

W.9-10.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Speaking and Listening

SL.9-10.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- b. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
- c. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

SL.9-10.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

SL.9-10.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

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Language

- L.9-10.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.9-10.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- L.9-10.3. Apply Knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- L.9-10.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Student Outcomes

Students will

- read closely to analyze the word choice, tone, and author’s purpose in a literary nonfiction text
- analyze how the central idea is shaped and supported by specific details
- investigate the cumulative impact of figurative language and specific word choices on both meaning and tone
- demonstrate understanding of a writer’s use of rhetorical devices to advance his purpose
- present findings on how Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. crafts his language and reveals his purpose throughout the text

Materials

Text:

- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (April 16, 1963)
http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html or
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=943>

Suggested Texts for Extension Tasks:

- “Civil Rights Address” by John F. Kennedy (delivered June 11, 1963)
- “We Shall Overcome” by Lyndon B. Johnson (delivered March 15, 1965)

Instructional Materials Included:

- Model of close reading questions for “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
- 3 column graphic organizer-*Analyzing “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”*

Instructional Resources:

- <http://www.sparknotes.com/biography/mlk/section6.rhtml>
- <http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/>
- <http://vimeo.com/27056255>
- <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Guide-AnalyticReading.pdf>
- https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/literacy-analysis-lesson?utm_source=Alpha+List&utm_campaign=d245033d36-Newsletter_June30_2012&utm_medium=email

Pre-Assessment

Teacher should pre asses

- students’ background knowledge on the Civil Rights Movement
- students’ knowledge of tone, figurative language and rhetorical devices

Students should read “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” independently, perhaps for homework, and use *Meta-cognitive Markers* (a system of cueing marks which includes a ? for questions about the text; a ! for reactions related to the text; and an * for comments about the text and underline to signal key ideas to track personal responses) which will be used as a point of departure for talking about the text.

Teachers should use the information from the students’ *Markers* to evaluate their comprehension of the text.

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Lesson Procedure

- Where applicable, complete any pre-assessment procedures to build background knowledge on The Civil Rights Movement and specifically the efforts of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Where applicable, complete any pre-assessment procedures to build background knowledge on analyzing figurative language and interpreting rhetorical devices
- As assigned, review the meaning of the concept of *Social Justice* with the class
- Listen carefully as your teacher reads “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and uses a “Think Aloud” to model close reading of (or a part of) the text.
- Follow along as your teacher continues to guide you through a close reading of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” Listen carefully as questions are answered and specific words, images, and rhetorical devices of the text are noted and analyzed.
- Continue closely reading the remainder of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” independently or in small groups as assigned
- Respond to any text-dependent questions as assigned by your teacher.
- In small groups, discuss the main idea of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and mark the text by highlighting, underlining, and/or annotating examples of specific claims that support that central idea
- Continue examining the text for specific components as assigned by your teacher (i.e., how elements of author’s craft reveal tone and purpose, and how the author effectively uses rhetorical appeals)
- Complete the graphic organizer as assigned by your teacher, paraphrasing highlighted information from the text on to the organizer
- Prepare a presentation on your group’s text-supported interpretation of the central idea of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and the effectiveness of specific examples of purposeful style and craft.
- Respond thoughtfully to your classmates’ findings and perspectives.
- Be prepared to summarize your classmates’ points and evaluate their reasoning.
- Participate in a whole class discussion on the central idea of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and how Dr. King develops his line of reasoning over the course of the text.

Lesson Closure

Students will provide an objective summary of the last paragraph of “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and explain whether they think the last paragraph is an effective conclusion to the letter.