

Unit Submission Template

Unit Length	10 days (60 min periods) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 lessons over 5 days ● 5 student development days
Grade Level(s)/Subject(s)	9-12 grade ELA
Unit Overview	<p>Stories have the power to pierce people’s hearts and change their minds. They are a conduit to building empathy and resurfacing the voices of historically marginalized groups whose narratives have often been told by the oppressors. The hunter telling the story of the lion has been so normalized most people do not recognize that the “other” perspective is missing.</p> <p>This unit will focus on the concept of counter storytelling by analyzing and interrogating Pulitzer underreported stories that represent the lived experiences of BIPOC and historically marginalized folks. Students will use these stories as a springboard to consider the power in people telling their own stories by analyzing the impact of being immersed in these stories.</p> <p>Students will explore the concept of counter storytelling by analyzing underreported news stories that capture the lived experiences of BIPOC and historically marginalized folks. Students will consider the power in people telling their own stories and make personal connections to themes, ideas, and issues that inspire counter narratives.</p> <p><u>Essential Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How do we celebrate ourselves and the multiplicity / pronouncement of our identities?</i> ● <i>How do we read the world critically?</i> ● <i>Where do our differences come from?</i> ● <i>How do personal stories help us understand and empathize with stories outside of our lived experiences?</i> ● <i>What story do I want to share about my own lived experiences that counters what others may think about who I am?</i>

<p>Teacher’s Note</p>	<p>In order to engage in this unit meaningfully, students should have opportunities prior to this unit to build deep understanding regarding the following ideas and concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intersection of identity: How do we identify? What is associated with different intersections of our identity? ● Privilege ● Systemic Oppression and Settler Colonialism ● Marginalization ● Whose stories have been elevated in the past? Which voices are missing and why?
<p>Objectives & Outcomes</p>	<p>As content creators, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyze and interrogate the power of elevating underreported stories in journalism ● Reflect on their own lived experiences and determine 1-2 stories in their own lives they feel are important to elevate ● Determine what mode is most effective to use as a means of sharing their stories ● Craft multimodal stories by using personal voice while integrating their cultural and linguistic pluralism in their work ● Share their creations with authentic audiences
<p>Learning Standards</p>	<p>ELA Common Core Standards 11/12</p> <p>11-12.RL.3: Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).</p> <p>11-12.RL.5: Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.</p> <p>11-12.RL.7: Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)</p>

	<p>11-12.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <p>11-12.W.3: Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative</p> <p>11-12.W.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.</p>
<p>Unit Resources (star Pulitzer Center Resources)</p>	<p>"Poem Missing More Than Just a Word" by Tanaya Winder from The Poetry Foundation</p> <p>The Untold Story of Black Cowboys in America, Ashonti Ford, Spectrum Bay News *</p> <p>The Architecture of a Counterstory: A Blueprint to Reclaiming Our Own Narratives Wakelet Collection by Sawsan Jaber</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underreported Journalism Stories Wakelet Choice Board 2. Ted Talk Counterstories Wakelet Choice Board 3. Short Counterstories 4. Poetic Counterstories <p>The Standing Rock Resistance and Our Fight for Indigenous Rights, a TED Talk by Tara Houska (10:55)</p> <p>Show Way by Jacqueline Woodson. Explore art and the inclusion of historical elements in visual story.</p> <p>Courage by Bernard Waber. Explore the definition of courage.</p> <p>Dear Mr. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School by Mark Teague. Consider character creation and the series of epistles as a structural format.</p> <p>The Secret File of Grownups by Michael Hayes. Explore the format of text.</p> <p>A Fine, Fine School by Sharon Creech. Discuss character and use of repetition to enhance voice</p> <p>Additional articles, videos, and photos linked in the The Architecture of a Counterstory: A Blueprint to Reclaiming Our Own Narratives Wakelet Collection by Sawsan Jaber</p>

	Teacher-created worksheets and rubric
Performance Task(s)	<p><u>Educator Preface:</u> Since I teach in a primarily minoritized school district, this unit will give students the opportunity to craft their own counterstories integrating their personal identities, language, values, lived experiences into those stories. Like underreported stories, students will see the intersections and power of elevating those stories. Students will determine how they want to craft those stories as content creators and must be able to rationalize their choices as they progress through the completion of the task.</p> <p><u>Performance Task:</u> Students craft children’s picture books that they will be required to transform into multimodal outputs in video form.</p> <p>Students will reflect on their own lived experience and history to amplify a story that you feel is important to share. Students will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What part of your history and lived experience do you want to elevate? ● What story do you want to tell that will serve as a mirror of your own experience and as a window for others to learn about you (Sims-Bishop, 2016)? ● Who is your authentic audience and why do they need to know your story? ● What word choice, images, or sounds will enhance the telling of your story? ● What rhetoric will you use in order to make your story memorable?
Assessment/Evaluation	<p>This Counterstory Rubric [.pdf][.docx] was created with students after viewing several underreported stories and reading and analyzing mentor texts that are in different modes that would be considered impactful stories.</p> <p>Students will unpack the characteristics that would deem them well told stories and that will be used as a checklist as they progress through their own creations as well as a self evaluative reflective tool and finally, an evaluative tool.</p>

Day 1 and Day 2
Lesson Length: 2 class periods

Essential Questions

- Why does the phenomenon of underreported stories exist?
- What stories are elevated? What stories are hidden?
- Who is telling the stories on both ends?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Dialogic e journals (this is a blank Google document)

["Missing More Than Just a Word" by Tanaya Winder](#) from [The Poetry Foundation](#)

[The Untold Story of Black Cowboys in America, Ashonti Ford, Spectrum Bay News](#)

Missing More Than Just A Word Graphic Organizer [[.pdf](#)][[.docx](#)]

Lesson Activities

Journal Prompt:

1. What is your favorite story and why? The story could be from a book, movie, or a story passed down to them from their parents, grandparents, religion, etc.

Educator note: This is a daily practice in my classroom. I hold 5 to 7 minutes for this task at the beginning of every class session. We use Dialogic e journals that are in the form of a Google Doc that students share with me. I am able to discuss things with them via commentary and e-conversations..

2. Share in small groups and generate a list of the characteristics that make stories great.

Lesson Steps:

1. Students read and annotate "[Missing More Than Just a Word](#)" independently.
2. Using the [Missing More Than Just A Word](#) Graphic Organizer, students will consider what this poem is saying about storytelling and the positionality of the poet as a Native American female.
 - a. On the graphic organizer, write some bulleted notes for this text to answer the questions:
 - What is this text about?
 - Whose voice is being elevated here?
 - What is this text saying about storytelling?
3. As a class, screen [The Untold Story of Black Cowboys](#) in America reported by Ashonti Ford.
 - a. Have students analyze the story as a class or independently by leveraging the questions from the graphic organizer:
 - What is this text about?
 - Whose voice is being elevated here?

- What is this text saying about storytelling?

4. Encourage students to discuss your responses for both texts in small groups. Students should discuss the similarities and differences exist between the two stories.
5. Jigsaw students and mix up the groups. Students should share their responses with their new group and discuss similarities and differences within the responses of their initial groups.

Closing:

Define the term *counter story* and describe the importance of a counter story to students.

Students should understand:

- A counterstory is a story told from the perspective of a member from a marginalized group that counters the single story perspectives that exist around their identities. Counter stories help these groups reclaim their narratives by elevating their lived experiences.
- Counterstories are important because historically the narrative of members from marginalized groups has been taken from them and are often told by their oppressors. These narratives often contribute to the criminalization of these groups.

Day 3

Essential Questions

- What makes a good story?
- Use the list that was created by the class and refined by the teacher to evaluate stories.

Lesson Materials & Resources

[The Standing Rock Resistance and Our Fight for Indigenous Rights, a TED Talk by Tara Houska](#) ((10:55)

[Underreported Journalism Stories Wakelet Choice Board](#)

[Ted Talk Counterstories Wakelet Choice Board](#)

Student journals

Chromebooks

Printed copies of class-generated checklist. *Review the Class Example: Characteristics of an Effective Story* [[.pdf](#)][[.docx](#)] for reference

Lesson / Activities

Lesson Steps

1. Share a printed copy of the class-generated checklist in lesson one as students walk into the classroom. If any integral items were missing, review them and explain why you included them in the list.
2. Screen [The Standing Rock Resistance and Our Fight for Indigenous Rights, a TED Talk by Tara Houska](#).
 - a. Instruct students to use the checklist to evaluate the story.
 - b. Students should discuss their individual assessments in small groups and then share out to the class.
3. Share the following Wakelet Boards with students, explaining that each resource is a choice board of underrepresented stories that counter the dominant narrative about historically underrepresented groups:
 - [Underreported Journalism Stories Wakelet Choice Board](#)
 - [Ted Talk Counterstories Wakelet Choice Board](#)
 - [Short Counterstories](#)
 - [Poetic Counterstories](#)
 - b. They should choose two stories to read independently and write a journal entry analyzing what elements of the story the journalist chose to elevate in their coverage and what social justice cause is captured in the story. Students should use the checklist and the following questions to drive their response:
 - Which perspective was elevated through this story?

- Did it change a previous understanding or perspective? If so, how?
- Consider the story you chose. What interest or connection led you to probe into this topic?
- What questions do you have?

4. Select a few students share their summaries out to the class.

5. As a class, define the term counterstory by having students think about what it means to counter someone or something. Develop a definition collectively.

Homework

Students will choose a Ted Talk from the *Ted Talk CounterStories* choice board and complete the same exercise for homework. They should be prepared to discuss how the Ted Talks are counter stories.

Day 4

Lesson Objectives & Essential Questions

Lesson Objectives:

Students will

- Connect an African proverb with the idea of counter stories
- Analyze the power of a counter story

Essential Questions:

- What counter story do you want to elevate?
- Who is your audience?
- Why this story and this audience?
- Whose story would we tell if we were telling a counter-story? What might that story / perspective include?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Photo of African Proverb on the Lion and the Hunter [[.pdf](#)][[.docx](#)]

Journals

Checklist

Lesson / Activities

Journal Prompt:

1. Post the African Proverb on the board. Students should describe what the proverb means to them in their journals.
2. Students should discuss the interpretations of the proverb in small groups. Have one member of each group share a summary of their small group conversation with the class.

Lesson Steps:

1. Project the definition of a counter story. Ask students: how does our definition of a counter story relate to this proverb?
2. In pairs, have students discuss the following:
 - Whose story is being elevated? Whose story is being silenced?
 - Whose story would we tell if we were telling a counterstory? What might that story / perspective include?
3. Now students will consider their list of what makes a powerful story and think of a counterstory they want to tell. They will take the rest of class to *barf write* (write without stopping or worrying about syntax or grammar). This should be a micro story (a smaller story that had a big impact on crafting their identity) from their own lives.

- a. Tell students: Reflect on three pivotal moments that helped shape your identity. Freewrite to flesh out these stories.
 - i. You are recreating the moment for someone who was not present so get into the details so be descriptive. What did that moment feel, sound, smell like? Show me, don't tell me.
 - ii. Write about the impact of the moment on who you are today. Write about the impact of how this story shapes how you see the world and interact with others. Write about the impact of this on your self concept and identity.
 - iii. Remember, less is more here. So limit these free writes to a few impactful moments not telling your life story

- b. For further support, offer the following themes of identity:
 - The intersections of their identity
 - The epiphanies that have had as a result of incidents in their life
 - Moments that they have witnessed or experienced
 - Personal values when and how they became important to you
 - Cultural and linguistic pluralism
 - Incidents of misconception about who they are or what they represent and how they worked through them, etc.

Educator note: Themes listed above are ideas we have worked on all year. If they are new to your students. Consider spending some time building an understanding of these ideas.

Homework

Encourage students to build on their writing. Tell students to add more information or sensory details to the three memories. Have students consider what will help the reader share the experience with them?

Day 5

Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the thoughts of a journalist on deciding which underreported story to elevate?• What of their own identities, values, beliefs feeds into their choices as content creators?• How do they use their platforms as journalists to tell these stories? Why?
Lesson Materials & Resources
Journalist guest speaker
Lesson / Activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Schedule a virtual journalist visit through the Pulitzer Center. Have the journalist speak to your students about the following questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the thoughts of a journalist on deciding which underreported story to elevate?• What of their own identities, values, beliefs feeds into their choices as content creators?• How do they use their platforms as journalists to tell these stories? Why? <p><i>Educator note: Scheduling a journalist take 2-3 weeks to do so plan ahead. We invited Ashonti Ford to our classroom.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Before engaging with the journalist, inform students that they will be using their learnings from the conversation to determine which of their three stories they would like to develop into a counterstory.3. Encourage students to take notes as they engage with the guest speaker.

Days 6-10

Lesson Objectives
Students will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the counterstory they will develop ● Employ the characteristics of powerful stories and counterstories in their writing ● Incorporate strong story elements learned through previously read mentor texts
Lesson Materials
Counter Story Storyboard [.pdf][.docx] Counter Story Rubric [.pdf][.docx] Student journal Student writing
Lesson / Activities
<p><u>Lesson Steps:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have students review the drafts of the three stories they have considered developing for this task. Encourage students to choose one story to develop. Students can use the following resources to help them make their choice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small group discussion ● Storytelling checklist 2. Students should listen to the reading of picture books that have creative structures. Some of the titles we explored were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Show Way by Jacqueline Woodson. Explore art and the inclusion of historical elements in visual story. ● Courage by Bernard Waber. Explore the definition of courage. ● Dear Mr. LaRue: Letters from Obedience School by Mark Teague. Consider character creation and the series of epistles as a structural format. ● The Secret File of Grownups by Michael Hayes. Explore the format of text. ● A Fine, Fine School by Sharon Creech. Discuss character and use of repetition to enhance voice. 3. Review the Counter Story Storyboard and Rubric with students. 4. Have students complete storyboards building the structure of the stories. Meet with students through individual conferencing to give feedback on storyboards using the rubric they helped develop to drive the conversation.