### Units for Books Mini-Grant Application & Planning Template

An expandable version of this form is available online at [www.chicagogearup.org](http://www.chicagogearup.org) or [www.neiu.edu/~yal](http://www.neiu.edu/~yal).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Unit</th>
<th>Book with ISBN:</th>
<th>Date Submitted: November 21, 2016</th>
<th>Date to be Implemented: December 12, 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Power of Stories</td>
<td>Books are for Literature Circle Unit-Books on list should be in sets of 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Circuit-</td>
<td>ISBN-10: 0826317979</td>
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<td>Silver People</td>
<td>ISBN-10: 0544668707</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian</td>
<td>ISBN-10: 9780316013697</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persepolis</td>
<td>ISBN-10: 037571457X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am Malala</td>
<td>ISBN-10: 037571457X</td>
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**Unit Developed by:** Madeline Kobayashi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade /Subject:</th>
<th>Freshmen Reading Language Arts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of students/classes</td>
<td>58 students/ 2 classes</td>
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**Email:** mdrolon@cps.edu

**School:** Senn High School

**Dates when Unit will be Implemented:**

**Hours of Class Time Needed for Unit:** 30 hours

**Curriculum Areas and Grade Level(s):**

Reading and Writing
**9th Grade**

**Brief Description of the Unit** (50-75 words): This unit explores the power of stories. By the end of the unit, students will believe in the power of their own stories and will develop the literacy skills to write and share their stories. During the unit, students will read, analyze, and critique dominant narratives in a variety of texts and genres. Then, they will write counter-narratives that challenge a specific dominant narrative that they disagree with.

**Common Core Standards to be addressed by this unit.** *List the applicable learning standards.*

- **RL.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.
- **W.9-10.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **MYP Objective B: Organizing:** i. employ organizational structures that serve the context and intention.

**Teacher’s Focus Question:** As a teacher, what aspect of your own instructional practice will you be examining or testing out in this unit? What is your goal and how will you know if you have succeeded?

One area of my practice that I continue to struggle in is how to create and provide students with opportunities to have an authentic audience as well as a genuine, real-world purpose and application for their reading and writing. I want to take what students are learning and move it beyond the walls of my classroom, but I struggle with how to do that. How can my students see the value and purpose of what they’re learning and how can the literacy skills they’re developing have a profound impact on their lives outside of school?

So, my hope is that this unit will provide students with an opportunity to connect to a real audience. My goal is for students to write counter-narratives- compositions that challenge dominant narratives- and those counter-narratives will be shared with an audience outside of the classroom. My goal is also for students to realize the power and value of their voice, as expressed through writing. I want my student to believe that their stories matter, that they have the power to define who they are, and that they can reject the dominant narratives that falsely label and categorize who they are.

**Documentation Plan:** Please list the documentation you will submit to GEAR UP when you implement your unit. Documentation should reflect student work related to your focus question. It should include samples of student work, pictures, video, or other artifacts from your unit.

Documents of Student learning will include:

- **Blog Posts- screenshot of blog post**
  - **Purpose:** to blog about process- capturing learning that’s occurring during counter-narrative project, commentary on stories (shared texts and independent reading)

- **Self-evaluation and Reflection- written or typed by students**
  - **Purpose:** reflect on process of reading and writing about texts- what did you take away from the unit; reflect on process of writing counter-narrative

- **Where I’m From Poem**
  - **Sharing the story of who we are and the layers of our identities that are ignored in the mainstream narrative**

- **Text Analysis**- Provided with a piece of informational text, students will read, annotate, and analyze the text to address the following questions: what is the story being told by this text? How are people being portrayed in this story? What is the truth in this story? What is unknown based on this story?

- **Published Writing Piece- Counter Narrative**
Request for photographer or video: Based on availability, GEAR UP staff can photograph or videotape an aspect of the unit (a debate, art project, final presentation, etc.

What I would like to photograph or video:
- Conferences- students will confer with their teacher and their peers during the writing process
- Discussions- small group and whole class discussions
- Going public- book talks and presentations of final projects

Student media releases signed by a parent or guardian are mandatory.

The 4 R’s--Rigor, Relationships, Relevance, and Reflection
We believe that effective instruction has four elements in common. The schools set high academic standards and provide rigorous instruction paired with meaningful support so that all students can meet those high standards. Teachers build trusting relationships with students and take steps to build community within their classrooms. They take an interest in students’ lives, drawing on their real-world experiences and current understandings to build new knowledge. Teachers make school relevant to students, showing them the connections between success in school and their plans for the future. Finally, instruction--and learning—get better when teachers and students intentionally reflect on the work they are doing. (What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public Schools, 2007. Consortium on Chicago School Research).

Academic Rigor

Enduring Understandings What do you want your students to understand and be able to use ten years from now?  
As consumers of information, it’s critical to develop effective literacy skills in order to make informed decisions and become active citizens in our community. There are stories being told each and everyday that impact how we see others as well as how we see ourselves. What are these stories being told? Who’s telling them? How can we develop the capacity to tell our own stories? By building a community of readers and writers, we are developing our capacity to analyze what we see, hear, and read, as well as counter the current narratives being told with stories of our own that truly capture the beauty and complexities of growing up in this complicated city we call home.

Essential Questions What are the open-ended questions that will promote inquiry into the heart of the subject or discipline?  
Essential Questions: The Power of Stories
- Why do stories matter?  
- How can stories create change?  
- How are our identities related to and a reflection of mainstream society?

Knowledge and Skill What will your students know and be able to do at the end of the unit? How will your students use higher order thinking skills?  
- Develop relationships and positive rapport with teacher and classmates  
- Establish a classroom community of readers and writers  
- Strengthen reading and writing stamina  
- Learn and apply reading and writing strategies  
- Explore our identities as readers and writers  
- Understand how identity is both related to, and a reflection of dominant narratives in society  
- Develop capacity to analyze written and visual texts
- Write counter-narratives that capture the beauty and complexities of our identities

### Assessment Evidence/Instruments
*How will you know how well your students learned? Attach rubrics and checklists, if used.*

**Unit Assessment:**
- Text Analysis- Provided with a piece of informational text, students will read, annotate, and analyze the text to address the following questions: what is the story being told by this text? How are people being portrayed in this story? What is the truth in this story? What is unknown based on this story?
- Published Writing Piece- Counter Narrative

**Formative Assessments:**
- Book Talk
  - Purpose: to share a story that has impacted your perspective or identity in some way
- Blog Posts
  - Purpose: to blog about process- capturing learning that’s occurring during counter-narrative project, commentary on stories (shared texts and independent reading)
- Peer Feedback posts
  - Purpose: provide partner with feedback on their counter-narrative project, engage in discussions around shared texts, ask questions and discuss independent reading books
- Self-evaluation and Reflection
  - Purpose: reflect on process of reading and writing about texts- what did you take away from the unit; reflect on process of writing counter-narrative
- Writing notebook entries
  - My Name
  - Writing from an Artifact
  - Identity Web Entries
- Reading notebook entries
  - Purpose: responding to shared texts and independent reading books- what texts show about humanity- focus on themes and connections
- My Name Writing Piece
  - An important part of everyone’s story is their name. This writing piece is an opportunity to explore your story and share it with others.
- Partner Interview
  - Learn how to listen to someone else’s story, take notes, compose another person’s story with the aim of accurately representing another person

**Summative Assessments:**
- Revised Blog Post
  - After receiving feedback from peers, revise one blog post that is a response to an independent reading book
- Where I’m From Poem
  - Sharing the story of who we are and the layers of our identities that are ignored in the mainstream narrative

### Learning Activities
*List the most important learning activities students will perform during the unit.*

**Organization and Sequence:**
**Major threads:**
- **Weeks 1-3:**
  - Exploring and Sharing Stories
    - A look at self- developing personal stories- personal narrative entries in writer’s notebook
    - Making connections: tracing commonalities and seeing connections
amongst peers- students will interview a partner and write the story of their partner’s name

- Weeks 4 & 5
  - Narratives and Counter-narratives
  - Powerful stories of the summer: how mainstream narratives impact perspective-how we see ourselves and how others see us- students will engage in inquiry stations to explore the dominant narratives of the summer and fall. They will look at images, quotes, music, videos, news articles, and a Ted Talk to develop background knowledge. They will also use the inquiry to stimulate thinking and choose a dominant narrative they want to write about in their final project.
  - Analyzing Stories- seeing mainstream and/or counter narratives in what we read
    - Whose story is being told? How is it being told? What voices are missing? Why?
    - Students will engage in a variety of texts (literature, news articles, social media posts, Ted Talks, music, youtube videos, etc.) and analyze those texts to determine the message, audience, purpose, and speaker. Students will also be able to differentiate between dominant narratives and counter-narratives. They will learn how to question texts in order to understand voice, perspective, and power.

- Week 6- Students will explore the questions below through inquiry, reading, writing, viewing, and discussions.
  - Understanding the connection between our stories and other stories
    - How we see ourselves and how others perceive us
    - How stories being told in the media misrepresent us
    - How our identities are both related to and a reflection of master narrative in society

- Weeks 7-9- Students will spend the final phase of the unit creating their counter-narratives
  - Writing counter-narratives
  - Going public and taking action- students will share their work with a

Differentiating Instruction In what ways does the unit respond to students' different learning styles or multiple intelligences? What modifications are made for students with special needs? ELL students?

The following accommodations and modifications will be used to meet the needs of students with special needs and ELL students:

- One-on-one reading and writing conferences
- Use of a variety of texts that range in lexile level and readability. This includes use of Hi-Lo texts, graphic novels and picture books
- Models and exemplars are used to provide students with an additional scaffold in completing the final project
- Small group discussions
- Use of writing partners
- Graphic organizers and outlines
- Sentence stems

The final project will respond to students’ different learning styles and multiple intelligences by providing students with choice in terms of how they want to present their counter-narrative. Students will be able to choose from art-based project, public service announcement, or a written composition. Also, students will choose their own topic for their final project.
<table>
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<th>Relevance</th>
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<td><strong>How does the unit relate to students’ lives, skills, cultures, language, and background knowledge?</strong></td>
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Students are sharing important pieces of their lives by writing counter narratives that challenge dominant narratives. They will decide on a dominant narrative that they disagree with. This dominant narrative is one that addresses at least one aspect of the student’s identity - language, religion, culture, gender, race/ethnicity, etc. The students will determine which dominant narrative they find most problematic. They will then write a counter narrative that shares stories that more accurately reflect their identity.

**How does the unit show students the relevance of their work in school to their future lives?**

Young people today are inundated with information. As consumers of information, it’s critical to develop effective literacy skills in order to make informed decisions and become active citizens in our community. There are stories being told each and everyday that impact how we see others as well as how we see ourselves. What are these stories being told? Who’s telling them? How can we develop the capacity to tell our own stories? By building a community of readers and writers, we are developing our capacity to analyze what we see, hear, and read, as well as counter the current narratives being told with stories of our own that truly capture the beauty and complexities of growing up in this complicated city we call home.

<table>
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<th>Relationships</th>
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<td><strong>How does the unit help you as a teacher build trusting relationships with your students?</strong></td>
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When students are allowed and encouraged to share important stories that matter to them, and when they are provided with creative freedom and space to explore topics that they believe have value in their lives, the relationships between teacher and students thrives. I will also share my own stories, stories that shape who I am as a person, not only as a teacher. Students see that I trust them enough to share important pieces of me, and that will encourage students to trust me with their important stories.

**How does the unit build, support, and draw from a trusting classroom community?**

This unit focuses on building classroom community by sharing the stories that shape and define who we are. By using one-on-one conferences, small group discussions, whole class discussions, and by providing students with written feedback during the writing process, students are supported through every phase of their learning.

<table>
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<td><strong>In what ways will students be asked to reflect on their learning? How do they monitor their understanding, ask critical questions, and connect what they are learning to their own experience?</strong></td>
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Students will use blogging as a way to document their learning process. They will write about their challenges, successes, questions, concerns, and frustrations. They will also read and respond to their classmates’ blogs, which allows them to share resources, problem-solve and
trouble-shoot with their classmates, and engage in dialogue around the topics they are writing about.

How will I as a teacher know what the students are learning?  What?  So What?  Now what?

I will use the following tools to monitor student learning:

- Blogging- I will read and respond to student blogs. My responses will provide feedback on their work, ask questions and guide their inquiry, and provide encouragement as they work through their projects.
- Conferences- I will meet with students weekly in one-on-one conferences to check-in and provide support and feedback.
- Google Docs- I will use Google Docs and the comment feature to check on students work and provide feedback on their written work during the process, so that they can use that feedback to draft, revise, and edit their work.