

What Matters the Most through Reading and Writing

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Abstract

Literature should force students to think. In this curriculum unit on What Matters the Most through Reading and Writing, students are exposed to a literature rich environment that reflect students' culture, various ethnic, racial, and cultural groups. They learn to take responsibility for their education, utilizing reading and writing in a variety of genres. Students learn how to use reading and writing as a vehicle to bring about social change.

The range of issues that students bring to the classroom is hardly ever a part of curriculum adaptations: the academic curriculum is the focus to the exclusion of a social curriculum. The most affected are those students of low socioeconomic status. Studies have shown that the larger the gap the less effective the teaching and learning. By middle school, students need a device to capture their interest. Reading and writing can help our students explore their convictions. As teachers, we can work alongside our students to guide them toward creating positive social change.

The literature in this unit will teach students that they can change conditions using their imagination to invent and shape the kind of world they want to live in. It is intended for seventh and eighth grade students with various reading and writing skills that range from barely literate to highly proficient. The major issue is to keep students engaged and improve their reading achievement. Consequently helping students feel connected with stories about people committed to effecting positive social change. In general, the purpose of this curriculum unit is to motivate students to work directly with the teacher and peers to improve as readers and writers. The process of integrating, scaffolding and direct reading and writing instruction will provide a foundation for students to succeed.

This unit will permit students to master skills, through literacy practice. Students will gain knowledge about the relevance of reading and writing as they explore their own principles. The unit will teach students to collaborate, and to support each other as well as shape their writing through sharing of personal narratives and feedback. The unit will expose students with various reading interest to texts that are accessible.

At the end of this unit, students should experience an increase in knowledge of the contributions of various ethnic, racial and cultural groups as they study the life of various

writers and activists who struggled for racial and social justice. Students will actively engage in cooperative learning activities that promote discussion about various texts. The aim of this unit is to create a literature-rich environment that accurately reflects students' cultural heritage and the contributions of many ethnic, racial, and cultural groups. Students' self-esteem is strengthened when they see and read about the contributions made by their cultural group.