Multicultural Children’s Literature Lesson Plan

Author: Melissa Ramp and Ashley Miller
Editor: Dr. Harty Stephanie

Subject: Reading, Writing, Social Studies
Topic: Underground Railroad
Grade: 3rd
Time of Day: Morning
Duration of the Lesson: 60 minutes
Book Title: Henry’s Freedom Box by Ellen Levine

Pre-instructional Planning

Prepare Ahead
Materials Needed: Henry’s Freedom Box, KWL chart, cardboard, scissors, markers, pencils, rulers, tape, glue, writing prompt paper on lined paper.
Arrangement Needed: Small groups of desks/tables.
Time Needed: 60 minutes
Providing for Individual Difference: The below benchmark students will be able to work with a partner on the writing activity if need be and the gifted students can elaborate with additional details than the minimum required. As for the “freedom box” activity, below benchmark students, benchmark students, and above benchmark students will be heterogeneously grouped.

Pennsylvania Standards:

Standard 1.1: Learning to read independently
  - Demonstrate after reading understanding an interpretation of both fiction and non-fiction text.
  - Demonstrate comprehension
Standard 1.4: Types of Writing
  - Include detailed descriptions of people, places, things
  - Write informational pieces using illustrations when relevant
Standard 1.5: Quality of Writing
  - Write with a sharp, distinct focus identifying topic, task, and audience
  - Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic
  - Write a series of related sentences or paragraphs with one central idea
  - Use descriptive words and action verbs
  - Spell common frequently used words correctly
  - Use capital letters correctly
- Punctuate correctly
- Use complete sentences

Standard 1.6: Speaking and Listening
- Listen to a selection of literature
- Listen to others
- Contribute to discussions
- Participate in a small and large group discussions and presentations

**Identify Desired Understandings/ Results:**
Students will be able to complete a KWL chart on the Underground Railroad/slavery and write an informational piece on what they would do to become free from slavery. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Underground Railroad and demonstrate an awareness that not all states and people accepted slavery.

**Assessment:**
We will assess student understanding by collecting the KWL chart, grading their writing on what they would do to become free using a rubric, and following directions to create the “freedom box”.

**Implementation of the Lesson**

**Introduce and Motivate:**
Before Reading: We will start by activating students’ background knowledge with the KWL chart on What they know about the Underground Railroad/slavery and what they Want to Know (Questions generated by the students). Additionally, we will transition in the book by reading an excerpt from the book to engage the students into wanting to hear more. This should take about 15-20 minutes.

**Explore and Enable- Reading and Responding to the Literature:**
During Reading: While we are reading the story aloud, we will think aloud highlighting important information that the students may want to write down in the What I Learned column of their KWL charts.
After Reading: We will ask the students what they have learned about the Underground Railroad/slavery and to fill out the “L” column of their KWL charts. This will take about 5-10 minutes.
Standard 1.1: Learning to read independently
Standard 1.6: Speaking and Listening

**Reflect and Rethink:**
Beyond What you Read: Individually, the students will write and informational piece given the prompt “What would you do to become free?” Some students will share their ideas to the classroom on how they would become free. We will be able to see if they are learning by
collecting and listening to their informational pieces. This will take approximately 15 minutes. To transition to the next activity, we will discuss with the students about their ideas and Henry’s idea of escaping slavery.

Standard 1.4: Types of Writing  
Standard 1.5: Quality of Writing  
Standard 1.6: Speaking and Listening

Wrap Up Activity:  
To end our lesson, we will put the students into small groups to create one side of the “freedom box” using cardboard. They will then work together as a class to put the box together and decide what other state that did not have slavery they would like to send Henry. We will give the students 20-25 minutes to complete the box and decide on a state.

Standard 1.4: Types of Writing  
Standard 1.5: Quality of Writing  
Standard 1.6: Speaking and Listening

Post-Instructional Review

Suggestions for Revision:  
After performing the lesson, we will assess our lesson by looking at their KWL charts and reading their writings to see what they have learned. In the event that many students do not understand, we will go back and revise our lesson or teach a mini lesson to help the students come to a better understanding of the Underground Railroad/slavery.

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Author/ Illustrator

Other Books Published by Ellen Levine, Author:

- I Hate English  
- If Your Name Was Changed at Ellis Island  
- If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon  
- If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad  
- If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King  
- If You Lived with the Iroquois  
- If You Lived at the Time of the Great San Francisco Earthquake  
- A Fence Away from Freedom  
- Ready, Aim, Fire!  
- The Tree that Would Not Die
Ellen Levine has written many stories about real life situations in the United States. Her books try to put you in someone’s shoes that actually lived through it. She makes it easy for younger children to understand and be able to connect to the story. Ellen really cares and is interested in historical events and tries to get others engaged in history.

Ellen Levine was born in New York City. She has a Master’s degree in political science from the University of Chicago and a Juris Doctor degree from New York University School of Law. She has worked in the film and television industry, taught adults and immigrant teenagers in the fields of special education and ESL programs, and served as a law clerk with Chief Judge Joseph Lord, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Levine devotes her time to writing, lecturing, and teaching young adults.

**Reference**

[http://content.scholastic.com/browse/contributor.jsp?id=3318](http://content.scholastic.com/browse/contributor.jsp?id=3318)

**Authors:** Melissa Ramp and Ashley Miller are Juniors in the Elementary Education major at Shippensburg University.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
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### Rubric Made Using RubiStar ([http://rubistar.4teacher.org](http://rubistar.4teacher.org)) by Ms. Ramp and Miller

**Story Writing: Henry’s Freedom Box**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neatness</strong></td>
<td>The final draft of the story is tradable, clean, neat and</td>
<td>The final draft of the story is tradable, neat and</td>
<td>The final draft of the story is tradable and some of the pages</td>
<td>The final draft of the story is tradable and some of the pages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>attractive. It is free of erasures and crossed-out words. It</td>
<td>attractive. It may have one or two erasures, but they are</td>
<td>are attractive. It looks like parts of it might have been done in</td>
<td>are attractive. It looks like parts of it might have been done in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>looks like the author took great pride in it.</td>
<td>not distracting. It looks like the author took some pride in it.</td>
<td>a hurry.</td>
<td>a hurry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus on Assigned topic</strong></td>
<td>The entire story is related to the assigned topic and allows the</td>
<td>Most of the story is related to the assigned topic. The story</td>
<td>Some of the story is related to the assigned topic, but a reader</td>
<td>No attempt has been made to relate the story to the assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reader to understand much more about the topic.</td>
<td>wonders off at one point, but the reader can still learn</td>
<td>does not learn much about the topic.</td>
<td>topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling and Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft.</td>
<td>There is one spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.</td>
<td>There are two or three spelling or punctuation errors in the</td>
<td>The final draft has more than 3 spelling or punctuation errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Character and place names that the author invented are spelled</td>
<td></td>
<td>final draft.</td>
<td>in the final draft.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>consistently throughout.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong></td>
<td>The story contains many creative details and/or descriptions</td>
<td>The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions</td>
<td>The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions,</td>
<td>There is little evidence of creativity in the story. The author</td>
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<td></td>
<td>that contribute to the reader’s enjoyment. The author has really</td>
<td>that contribute to the reader’s enjoyment. The author has used</td>
<td>but they distract from the story. The author has tried to use</td>
<td>does not seem to have used much imagination.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>his imagination.</td>
<td>his imagination.</td>
<td>his imagination.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Setting</strong></td>
<td>Many vivid, descriptive words are used to tell when and where</td>
<td>Some vivid descriptive words are used to tell the audience when</td>
<td>The reader can figure out when and where the story took place,</td>
<td>The reader has trouble figuring out when and where the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the story took place.</td>
<td>and where the story took place.</td>
<td>but the author didn’t supply much detail.</td>
<td>took place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy of Facts</strong></td>
<td>All facts presented in the story are accurate.</td>
<td>Almost all facts presented in the story are accurate.</td>
<td>Most facts presented in the story are accurate (at least 70%)</td>
<td>There are several factual errors in the story.</td>
</tr>
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