

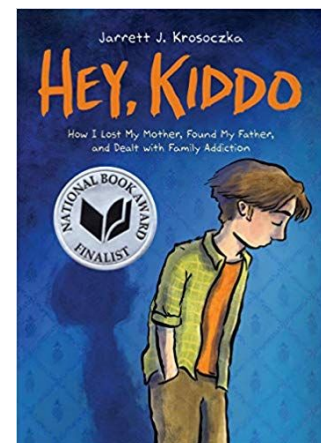
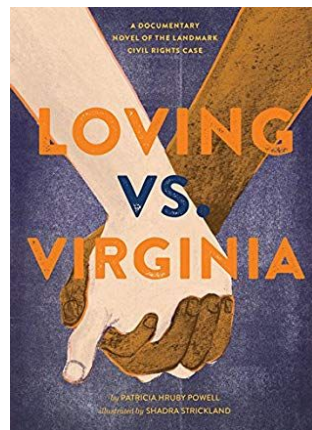
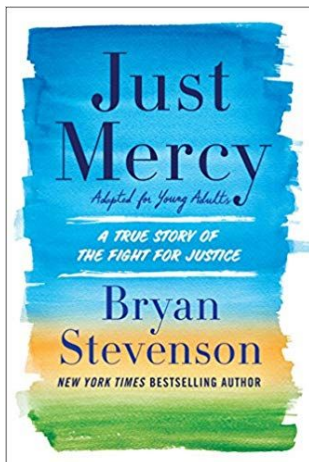
Rediscovering our Mystic Chords

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When faced with the country splitting by division over slavery, Abraham Lincoln addressed the country in his first inaugural address. “We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union” In a world that is divisive and finds people choosing sides, we want students to understand the “mystic chords” that connect us all. Our cross-curricular Civics Studies course combines the disciplines of English and Government to develop 21st century citizens that demonstrate understanding of our shared humanity. We will be using differentiated book groups to look at non-fiction texts from diverse authors and people. Using books like, *Just Mercy*, *Hey Kiddo*, and *Loving vs. Virginia*, we hope to connect students to diverse issues through a variety of creative nonfiction. Students will use these common themes to interview and publish stories of other students and community members in a piece of multimedia writing. Students will also create a public policy or initiative to address an issue within our community. We hope this unit will help them make connections to people with similar stories, but also connect with people different from themselves.



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Purpose:

We want our students to be able to successfully interact in a diverse community with respect and understanding. We hope our students use writing to contribute to a better world. We believe that creating a unit with choice will empower our students to have agency to engage in their learning and to engage in policies that are created at the local and national level. “The ability to be civically engaged relies upon an understanding of the historical foundations, structure and functions of American government” as stated in the themes for the Missouri Learning Standards for high school American government. As a Civics Studies class, we see the value in helping students participate in civic discourse as a way to impact our community.

Furthermore, providing choice and differentiation empowers our students in reading and writing. In their book *180 Days*, Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle cite choice in reading and writing as a foundational belief in shaping their classroom. We echo the belief that choice leads to self-reflection. “We want to create classrooms where students feel their lives are worthy of study and reflection” (2018). Additionally, collaboration leads to positive interdependence as well as individual accountability (Barrond, Darling-Hammond 2008). Collaboration is not just an academic skill, but an important skill for active citizenship. Our hope is that students see the need for individual responsibility but also the shared responsibility to one another both in their learning, but also in their role as citizens.

Finally, our school reflects the diverse, marginalized groups that are represented in the books we have chosen. 55% of our students come from economically disadvantaged homes (as measured by the free and reduced lunch rates) and 45% of students identify as either black, hispanic, or multiracial (U.S. News & World Report, 2019). Our book selection does not currently reflect the diversity of our students especially in non-fiction texts. We also have not been able to add the non-fiction titles that reflect our community in a real way. This grant will enhance our non-fiction novel selection so our students can connect and learn from people like themselves.

Objectives:

1. The student will be able to explain two or more central/main ideas in a text, analyze their development throughout the text, and explain the significance of the central ideas; provide an objective and concise summary of the text. (Missouri Learning Standards for English Language Arts 9-10.RI.1.D)
2. The student will be able to analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text or sequence information impacts the reader. (9-10.RI.2.A)
3. The student will be able to analyze how multiple texts reflect the historical and/or cultural contexts. (9-10.RI.3.C)
4. The student will be able to respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives including those presented in diverse media, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, resolve

contradictions when possible, and determine what additional information or research is needed. (9-10.SL.1.C)

5. The student will be able to follow a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, and voice are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience; expository techniques. (9-10.W.2.A)
6. Explain the powers and responsibilities of citizens and institutions to address and solve problems. (Missouri Learning Standards for Social Studies 9-12.GV.4.CC.C)
7. Explain a citizen's legal obligations, as well as opportunities for, engaging with and using local, state, and federal governments to shape decision-making. (9-12.GV.4.GS.B)
8. Evaluate the intended and unintended impact of government decision-making on individuals, groups, and society. (9-12.GV.3.PC.B)

These goals will be assessed using the multimedia writing and the initiative/proposal described in the timeline.

Goals

1. Students will work collaboratively in book groups reading a variety of non-fiction texts.
2. Students will analyze the central ideas presented in these books and make connections about common themes found throughout the novels.
3. Students will make connections between the issues seen in their books and issues seen in our class readings on the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
4. Students will create a multimedia piece of writing that makes connections between the themes in their book and with our school and community.
5. Students will study a community issue, develop a public policy/initiative to address the issue, and create a plan of action.

Timeline & Team Members:

This unit will take place at the beginning of 2nd semester and will take 8 weeks. Team members include Jill Villasana and Mandy Franklin.

Week 1- We will introduce the Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens as a general concept of study for the first week. Students will choose books and form book groups in which they'll set norms and a reading plan. Students will meet weekly with their book groups throughout the unit to discuss their reading and ask questions.

Week 2-3 Throughout the first 4 weeks we will share mentor texts with students that demonstrate situations when citizens rights were compromised and how responsible citizens intervened to advocate for themselves or others. We will share excerpts from Susan B. Anthony's speech "On Women's Right to Vote," Bryan Stevenson's TED Talk "We Need to Talk about an Injustice," and seminal supreme court cases like *Korematsu v. United States*.

Week 4-5- We will show students examples from the “Humans of New York” Instagram and StoryCorps as models of multimedia projects. Students will create questions for interviewing people. They should pick a focus or target group they are interested in to base their questions around. Students will interview other students, staff, and community members.

Week 6- Students will be interviewing and compiling photos, video, & audio clips to create their multimedia projects. Students will spend the last few days revise, edit, and publish their projects.

Week 7-8- Using their multimedia projects as a starting point, students will examine common issues within their community. Students will develop an initiative or public policy to address concerns. Students will work collaboratively in these groups to research solutions and create a plan of action. Students will make final revisions to their initiatives and present them to the class.

Budget:

Title & Author	Price (Amazon Prime)	Number of Copies	Total Cost
<i>Hey Kiddo</i> by Jarrett J. Krosoczka	\$12.17	7	\$85.19
<i>Just Mercy adapted for young adults</i> by Bryan Stevenson	\$10.99	6	\$65.94
<i>Loving vs. Virginia</i> by Patricia Hruby Powell	\$17.07	6	\$102.42
<i>Laughing at my Nightmare</i> by Shane Burcaw	\$8.53	7	\$59.71
<i>Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card</i> by Sara Saedi	\$7.40	6	\$44.40

<i>Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team</i> by Steve Sheinkin	\$10.98	7	\$76.86
<i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> by by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, James D. Houston	\$8.81	7	\$61.67
Totals		46	\$496.19

Promotion of MoCTE and Follow Up:

Since our unit will be implemented in Spring of 2020, we would like to create multimedia content to share our work and student products next spring for the MoCTE website and social media. We will be sharing the process through our social media as well (@MandyMfranklin and @MsVillasana). We plan to share this at the Write to Learn Conference in 2021.