

Unit Title: **Finding the Thin Spaces** by Nancy Thibo

LESSON #1

Audience: Junior high school students, English 3

Time duration: Three class periods per week

Big Idea/Essential Question: When applying the standards of the traditional English curriculum as tools to create a hands-on project, do low-income students shift their mindset about learning and open their minds to new ways of feeling about themselves and the world?

Objectives: Transform the Common Core Standards into tools of demonstration:

SL.11-12.1 - Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.R.9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Props and Materials:

Readings from articles by Diane Ravich

Data on poverty

Standardized tests results and the family income achievement gap

Activities:

Through Google Classroom students will have access to the same articles.

Students complete a source analysis for each of the three articles.

Student identify the main ideas, author's claim, and supporting details.

Student write a personal reflection about the impact of the information in these articles.

Socratic Seminar - Group of six students bring to the discussion their research and personal reflection. Questions are generated by the group leader and by the audience in order to flush out the key ideas of these articles and the personal connections to the school population at Big Sky High School.

Whole group discussion: What are the direct links between poverty and school achievement?

Quickwrite: Begin to flush out the reasons for the direct links between poverty and school achievement and how students may be victim to this system of disparity.

Reminders: There will be some push back due to the already developed opinions caused by the dominant narrative. There may be judgement of the testing results being connected to poverty, possibly not.

Peer Review: Aaron Fortner, IB English teacher. Suggested to explore the articles about corporate backed education.

LESSON #2 - Two to three class periods

Same title, audience, and essential question as the previous lesson

Objective:

W. 11-12.2. - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

L.11-12.1 - Demonstrate the command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking

Props and Materials: Writing Coaches. Lab time. MLA format, essay format, and editing tools.

Activities: Write a formal essay addressing the prompt: Who benefits from the today's system of public education? Why?

Students prepare a rough draft. Visit with the writing coaches. Edit draft into a second draft.

Second visit with the writing coach and complete a final draft.

The final paragraph of this writing should address the solution to this problem

Reminders: Students will need the lesson on in-text citation and MLA format. Students will need the help with developing explanations of the evidence.

Peer Review: Scott Mathews, ACT coordinator - Suggested to look at the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Would share the break down of our school's 2018 Spring ACT results which could be cross referenced with free and reduced lunch recipients.

LESSON #3 - Two to three class periods

Same title, audience, and essential question as the previous lesson

Objective:

Participate in the building of the bike rack cover or a bus stop shelter

- To meet the needs of students who use transportation other than a vehicle to get to school.
- To complete the requirements of community service and citizenship grade

Props and Materials: Materials should be provided. Student may bring tools that would help in the building of these structures. Appropriate work clothes.

Activities: With the help of the Missoula Mountain Line bus company, students would assist in the building of the bus stop shelter used by the students of Big Sky High School. Currently the students of low income wait for the bus in the rain, snow, sun, and wind. A shelter would suggest

support and comfort for those who need this form of transportation and may encourage others to take the bus to school.

Reminders: Students will need preliminary lessons on handling a hammer, cutting 2 x 4s, and specific tasks of this work. Safety rules will need to be discussed. Release forms will be needed.

Peer Review: Jessica Tuberty - Medical Interventions Instructor. Jess has done the ground work with Missoula in Motion and has received a grant to build the structure over the bike rack. The intention is for the bike rack area to be more protected from weather conditions and more inviting to students and staff who can bike to school. She likes the idea of the students doing the work with the help of Scott Traeder the Shop teacher.