

# **Empower Students: Change the World Through Critical Literacy**

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“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.”

-Nelson Mandela (July 16, 2003 speech in Johannesburg, South Africa)



# Who Are You?

Connections to others and the world. (Your turn)

- Where were you born?
- What is the heritage of your family?



## **Story Tree Writing (A WNB Activity)** (adapted from George Ella Lyon)

(Susan Prater LWP XXVI)

### **Part I**

- This is YOU! (Draw a picture of yourself.or tape one in)
- Write your name and birthday.
- How do you feel about how you look? Does the inside match the outside?
- Where were you born?
- What happened on the day you were born? Or the day you came into your family? Who was there?
- Was there a scary moment in your life? Maybe you were sick or hurt or got lost?
- What is your favorite thing to play with?
- What would you like to be when you grow up? Are there things you wanted to be in the past?

## Story Tree Part II

1. Here's your mother or whoever is like a mother to you. Draw a picture of her or him in.
2. What is her full name?
3. Where was she born? When?
4. Do you look or act alike? What similarities do you see? What differences?
5. What work does she do?
6. Ask her to name a toy or game she remembers.
7. What holidays did her family celebrate? How?
8. What did she want to be when she grew up?

# Story Tree Part III

1. Dad or the man that is like a dad to you... (draw a picture or put on a mask)
2. What is dad's full name?
3. Where and when was he born?
4. How are you alike? How are you different? Think about both the inside and the outside.
5. What work does he do?
6. Ask him to name a favorite toy or game he remembers.
7. What holidays did his family celebrate? How?
8. What did he want to do when he grew up?

## Story Tree Part IV

1. Do as much as you can answering things about your siblings.
2. Remember to draw pictures
3. Have you moved to different houses/places?

## Story Tree Part V(Setting)

1. Draw a picture of a place you live or have lived? (may be a grandparents home instead of yours or a favorite relative's house.)
2. Draw a floor plan. (Remember the upstairs and downstairs, etc.)
3. Put a memory in each room.
4. Conduct a sensory inventory of the house. (Smells in rooms, feelings, etc.)
5. Give voice. Think of things people said or might have said, in each room.
6. What changed between then and now?



# Story Tree Part VI

1. Write about a memory.
2. Use the information you listed.

# Everyone's family, history, and culture have worth.

**Great Grandparents**

- Great great great grandparents: William Wells (1810-1870), Sarah Ann Wells (1810-1870)
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**Great Grandparents**

- John Hester Rogers (1810-1870), Sarah Ann Rogers (1810-1870)
- Benjamin James Condon, Sr. (1810-1870), Sarah Ann Condon (1810-1870)
- My grandmother, Jean Condon, was an orphan. She did not know about her parents.

**Grandparents**

- Thomas Anne (1810-1870), John Hester Rogers (1810-1870)
- Benjamin James Condon, Sr. (1810-1870), Sarah Ann Condon (1810-1870)
- My mother, Mary Condon (1810-1870), John Hester Rogers (1810-1870)

**Family Tree**

**The Murder**

My great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great great grandfather John Rogers (1807-1884) helped translate the Bible into English when Henry VIII was the King. Unfortunately, when his daughter Mary became queen she had him burned at the stake.

**The Manslayer Confess**

# I AM FROM Poetry

## Memories

I am from my great-grandmother's quilt she made  
and rabbits in the yard  
my aunt and my dad's friend  
from rise and shine.  
Coke, fruit, brownies and cookies  
my memory box to my memories

Dane Hall, Grade 5  
Meredith-Dunn School, KY

## All Me

I am from tree hugger to recycling  
To loving animals to helping the earth

I am from art, the colors

The paint, markers, crayons, and color pencils, from canvas and paper

I am from swimming, flippers, goggles, and swimsuits  
Racing with friends and family to swimming like a fish

I am from dance, twirling, leaping, jumping  
Dancing in my room, letting myself out

I am from jumping on beds, eating at the table  
magazines and books to using skype with friends and family

I am from being clumsy, tripping over dog toys  
Tripping over cat toys, stubbing my toe

I am from Timmy annoying me, playing loud music  
Having a lot of friends over, barging in my room

Maddie Strayley Cook  
Meredith-Dunn School, KY

## Where I'm From

I am from books,  
From pictures of me and my family,  
Paintings of sunsets in the sky,  
I am from hoses to watering plants,  
From basketball that I play,  
To the grill we use,

I am from Dad and Mom who gave birth to me,  
From Gran and Grammy who help me,  
I am from "Run," "Let's go," and "Hurry."

I am from hot-dogs, to pancakes and bacon,  
From my mind that holds memories,  
From photo albums, to scrapbooks, and cameras,  
I am from all of these things I hold in my heart.

Diana Offutt, Grade 5  
Meredith-Dunn School, KY

# Mentor Texts that Promote Critical Literacy



# Texts for Exploring Critical Literacy

## *Poverty/Homelessness*

Fy Away Home

Eve Bunting

A Shelter in Our Car

Monica Gunning

Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen

Dyanne Disalvo-Ryan

December

Eve Bunting

The Hundred Dresses

Eleanor Estes

The Dream Jar

Bonnie Pryor

Tight Times

Barbara Shook Hazen

The Lady in the Box

Ann McGovern

Jonathan and his Mommy

Irene Smalls

Home is Where We Live: Life at a Shelter through

Jane Hertensen

a Young Girl's Eyes

## More Texts

Our Hungry Kittens

Emily Arnold McCully

The Rag Coat

Lauren Mills

Changing Places: A Kid's View of Shelter Living

Margie Chalofsky

Someplace to Go

Maria Testa

Something Beautiful

Sharon Dennis Wyeth

# More Texts

## *Different People and Different Places*

Teammates	Peter Golenbock
Crow Boy	Yashima
When Africa Was Home	K. William
The Cow that Went Oink	B. Most
<b>Text (cont.)</b>	<b>Author</b>
The Bus Ride	W. Miller
The Story of Ruby Bridges	R. Coles
Two Mrs. Gibsons	T. Igus
Molly's Pilgrim	B. Cohen
The Red Pencil	Andrea Davis Pinkney
Ties that Bind, Ties that Break	Lensey Namioka

We're All Wonders

RJ Palacio

Ugly

Robert Hoge

The Other Side

Jacqueline Woodson

Happy Birthday Mr. Kang

S. Roth

What's Wrong with Timmy

Maria Shriver

Be Good to Eddie Lee

Virginia Fleming

Ian's Walk: A Story About Autism

Laurie Lears

Looking After Louis

Lesly Ely

My Friend Isabelle

Eliza Woloson

Amazing Grace

M. Hoffman

Through My Eyes

Ruby Bridges

Richard Wright and the Library Card

W. Miller



(More of the list)

*Immigrants/Migrant Workers*

Tomas and the Library Lady

Pat Mora

Amelia's Road

Linda Jacobs Altman

My Diary from Here to There

Amanda Irma Perez

Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farm

S. Beth Adkin

Workers Tell Their Stories

## More

Esperanza Rising

Pam Munoz Ryan

How Many Days to America

Eve Bunting

A Day's Work

Eve Bunting

Going Home

Eve Bunting

Return to Sender

Julia Alvarez

***Hate/Racism/Segregation/Bullying***

Martin's Big Words

Doreen Rappaport

Sister Anne's Hands

Marybeth Lorbicki

The Recess Queen

Alexis O'Neill

The Hating Book

Charlotte Zolotow

Say Something

Peggy Moss

King of the Playground

Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Just Kidding

Trudy Ludwig

# More

Each Kindness

Jacqueline Woodson

The Stars Beneath Our Feet

David Barclay More

My Secret Bully

Trudy Ludwig

Anyhow, I'm Glad I Tried

Judith Vigna

Whitewash

N. Shange

Smoky Night

Eve Bunting

One Green Apple

Eve Bunting

# More

## *War*

Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust

Eve Bunting

Faithful Elephants

Tsuchiya

Baseball Saved Us

Eve Bunting

A Jar of Dreams

Yoshika Uchida

Journey to Topaz: A Story of the Japanese American

Yoshika Uchida

Evacuation

# More

Journey Home

Yoshika Uchido

The Bracelet

Yoshika Uchido

So Far From the Sea

Eve Bunting

The Wall

Eve Bunting

(More)

*Economy/ Labor Practices*

The Bobbin Girl

Emily Arnold McCully

By the Dawn's Early Light

K. Ackerman

A Carpet Boys Gift

Pegi Dietz Shea

Mill Child: The Story of Child Labor in America

R. Holland

Tar Beach

Faith Ringgold

Iqbal Masih and the Crusaders Against Child Slavery

Susan Kuklin

Grandma's Joy

Eloise Greenfield

# More

## *Sex and Age Discrimination*

The Man Who Kept House

Peter Christen Asbjornsen

When I Go Camping with Grandma

Marion Dane Bauer

The Goat Lady

Jane Bregoli

Oliver Button is a Sissy

Tomie DePaolo

The Sissy Duckling

Harvey Fierstein

The Story of Ferdinand

Munro Leaf

All I Want to Be is Me

Phyllis Rosenblatt



# More

10,000 Dresses

Marcus Ewert

Red A Crayon's Story

Michael Hall

Jacob's New Dress

Sarah and Ian Hoffman

My Princess Boy

Cheryl Kilodavis

From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun

Jacqueline Woodson

See You at Harry's

Jo Knowles

Desire Lines

Jack Gantos

Heather Has Two Mommies

Leslea Newman

A Tale of Two Daddies

Vanita Oechslager

# More

## *Environment*

Just a Dream

Chris VanAllsburg

Amazon Boy

T. Lewin

The Great Kapok Tree

L. Cherry

Someday a Tree

Eve Bunting

Nine Candles

M. Testa

Secret Place

Eve Bunting

The Lorax

Dr. Seuss

# More

## *Activism*

Let the Children March

Monica Clark-Robinson

Children of the Civil Rights Era

Paula Young Shelton

Freedom's Children, Young Civil Rights Activists Tell

Ellen S. Levine

Their Stories

We Were There Too! Young People in U.S. History C. A. Welch

Click Clack Moo, Cows that Type

Doreen Cronin

The Hero's Trail: A Guide to a Heroic Life

P. Hoose

# More

Kids On Strike	Susan Campbell Bartoletti
Good Girl Work: Factories, Sweatshops, and How	M. T. Brill
Women Changed Their Role in the American Workforce	
Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez	S. Currie
The Streets are Free	C. Gourley
Si Se Puede Yes We Can! Janitor Strike in L.A.	K. Krull
Hey Black Child	Useni Eugene Perkins
It All Comes Down to This	Karen English

## *Periodicals/Websites*

Daily Newspaper

NY Times (<https://www.nytimes.com>)

Scholastic (<http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com>)

Scope ( <https://scope.scholastic.com>)

New York Times Upfront( <http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/products/the-new-york-ti>

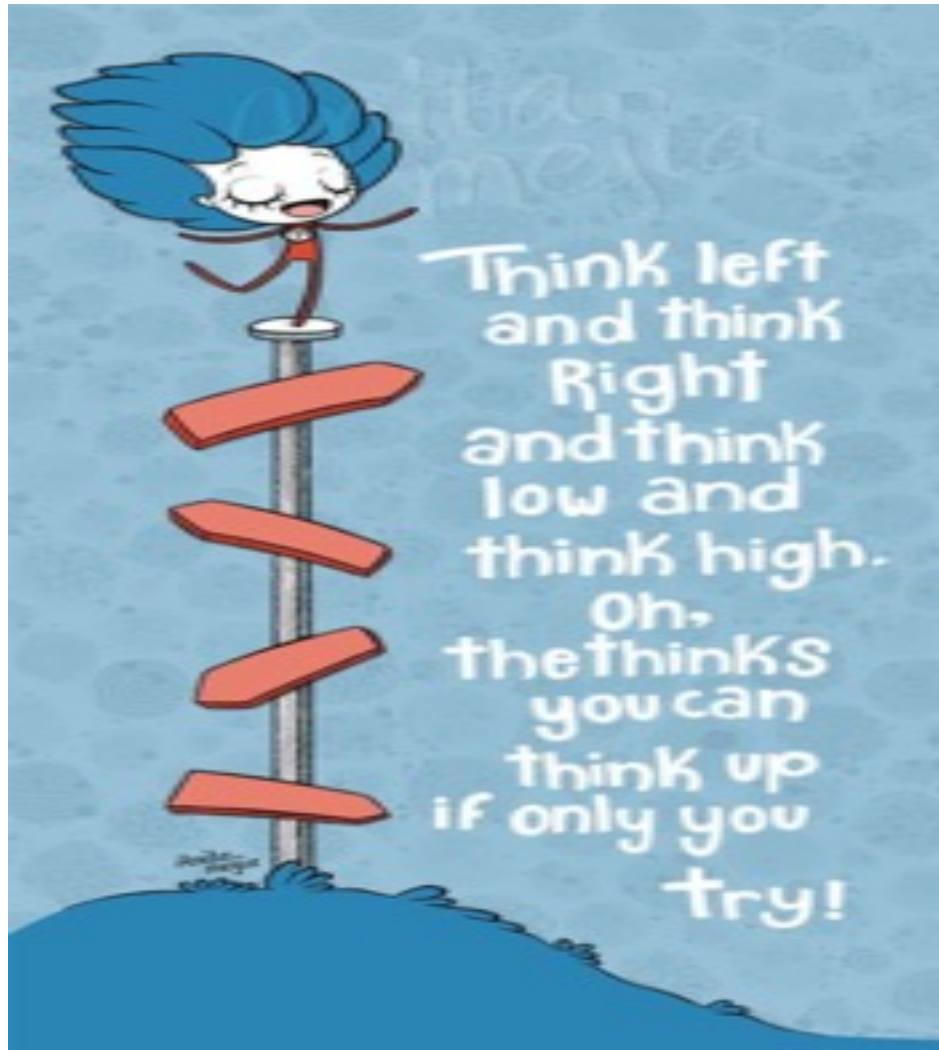
<https://www.teachingtolerance.org/>

# Critical Literacy

- Encourages students to think critically about power imbalances between populations
- Students are better equipped to recognize and respond to racism, sexism and other forms of social injustice.
- Focuses on equality, social justice and fair treatment
- Students can better understand their place within the power structure
- Can articulate criticism of unfair situations, and work toward change
- They are engaged and are given a voice.

(Blake, 2017)

(Seuss)



# Essential Questions Should:

- Be open-ended (will not have a single, final, and correct answer)
- Be thought-provoking and intellectually engaging, often sparking discussion and debate.
- Call for higher-order thinking, such as analysis, inference, evaluation, prediction. (It cannot be effectively answered by recall alone.)
- Points toward important, transferable ideas within (and sometimes across) disciplines.
- Raises additional questions and sparks further inquiry.
- Requires support and justification, not just an answer.
- Recurs over time; that is, the question can and should be revisited again and again.

(Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins' book, [Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Student Understanding](#), 2013)



# Videos and Other Media

Here are some examples of videos to use with students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMdmSerORw0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U>

Daily Newspaper

NY Times (<https://www.nytimes.com>)

Scholastic (<http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com>)

Scope ( <https://scope.scholastic.com>)

New York Times Upfront(<http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/products/the-new-york-times-upfront>)

<https://www.tolerance.org/>

# Wall of Intolerance

Racism Ecology

Hate Homelessness

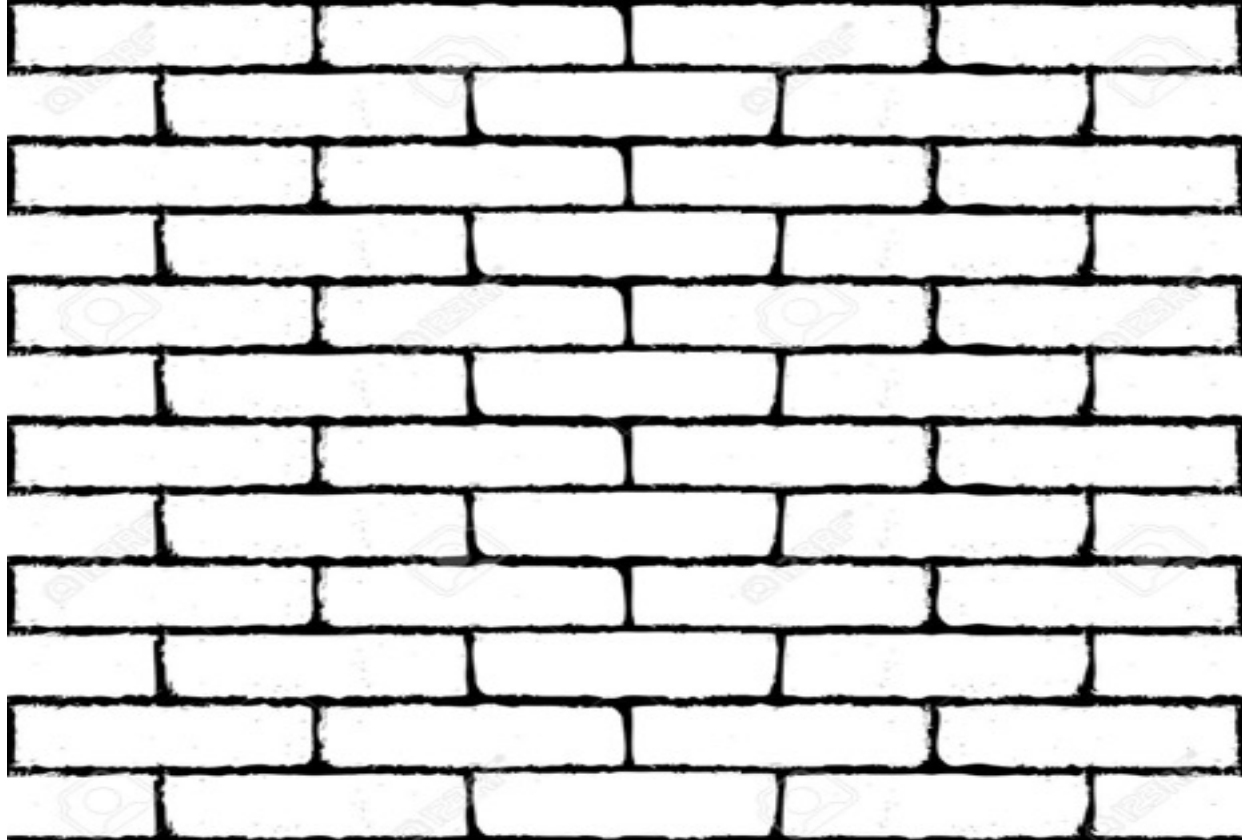
Gender Religion

Inequality Poverty

War Ageism

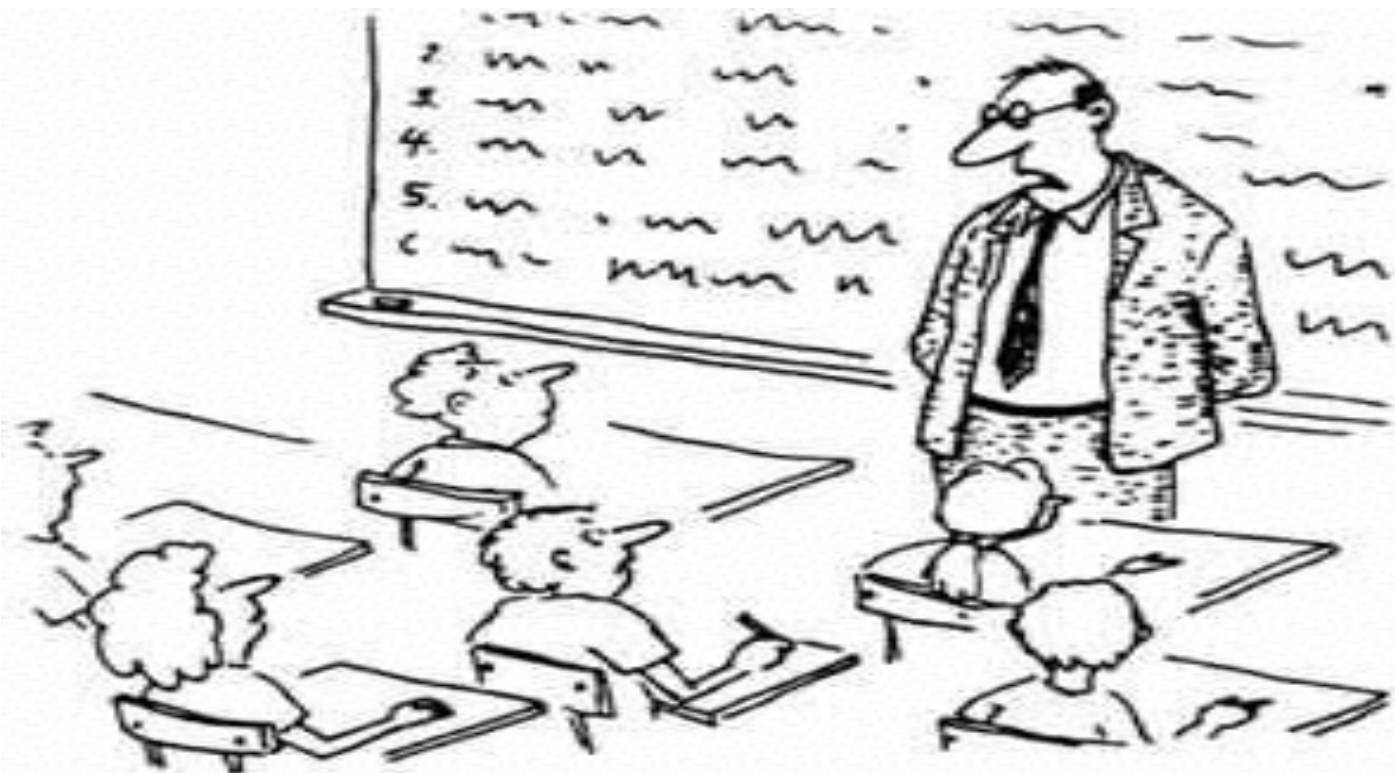
Sexism

Bullying



# Book Survey

- Read or examine the book with your group.
- Discuss what social issues are brought up by the book.
- Write a word or words that come to mind as an issue or feeling that is presented in the text.
- Be ready to discuss.



*"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"*

# How Do You Limit Teacher Bias?

*In Social Studies, ask questions like:*

- Why might an emperor (leader) be nervous?
- What does a person need to do to earn the right to rule? On what grounds should a ruler lose the right to govern? Is dishonesty ever acceptable in a leader?
- Have students compare religious freedom in the Roman Empire (or culture being studied) with the religious freedom of the United States today.
- Why might some people be scared by a new religion?
- What might a nation need to have a long period of peace?
- What makes a good leader?
- How does religious activity affect the modern world?

# Use Quotes from Mentor Texts

*Ties that Bind, Ties that Break* Lensey Namioka

“...a girl in a Chinese family was a luxury, someone who might be dearly loved but who was always a drain on the family resources.”

*The Wall* *Eve Bunting*

“But I'd rather have my grandpa here, taking me to the river, telling me to button my jacket because it's cold. I'd rather have him here.”

*Fly Away Home* *Eve Bunting*

“Sometimes I get mad, and want to run at them and push and shout, Why do *you* have homes when we don't? What makes *you* so special?”

# More Quotes

Amazing Grace Mary Hoffman

“You can't be Peter- that's a boy's name.” But Grace kept her hand up. “You can't be Peter. He isn't Black.”

We're All Wonders R.J Palacio

“I just don't look ordinary. I don't look like other kids.”

So Far From the Sea Eve Bunting

“Sometimes in the end there is no right or wrong. It is just a thing that happened long years ago. A thing that cannot be changed.”

# Communicate

- No surprises- fully inform families what is going on in class
- Let it be known what standards, research, and rationale are being used
- Let family be part of the classroom conversation:
  1. Give prompts for students to ask at home.
  2. Families participate and gain an understanding of what is being discussed.



# Experiential Engagement

- Bring in speakers such as local politicians, social agency heads, environmentalists
- Take field trips where you can make a connection to a cause.
- Engage in service projects.

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.” Muhammad Ali



# From Discussion to Writing

They are killing us one by one  
Our heroes and our leaders  
We can't trust anymore unless they are our color  
We barely can trust them  
Living here and growing up  
I'm learning that things will always be tough  
But more than the white girl next to me  
Because once people look at us  
They see different things than they are supposed to see  
Bernija 2016

# Writing Genres

- Poetry
- Essays
- Persuasive Letters and Essays
- Narrative Articles
- Feature Articles
- Personal Narrative (where a lesson is learned)
- Reflections
- Research Papers

“Our democracy desperately needs diverse voices to engage in mature dialogue if we are to ever find compassionate solutions to our problems. Schools must be where young people learn how to do this.”

(T. Elijah Hawkes, 2017)



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