

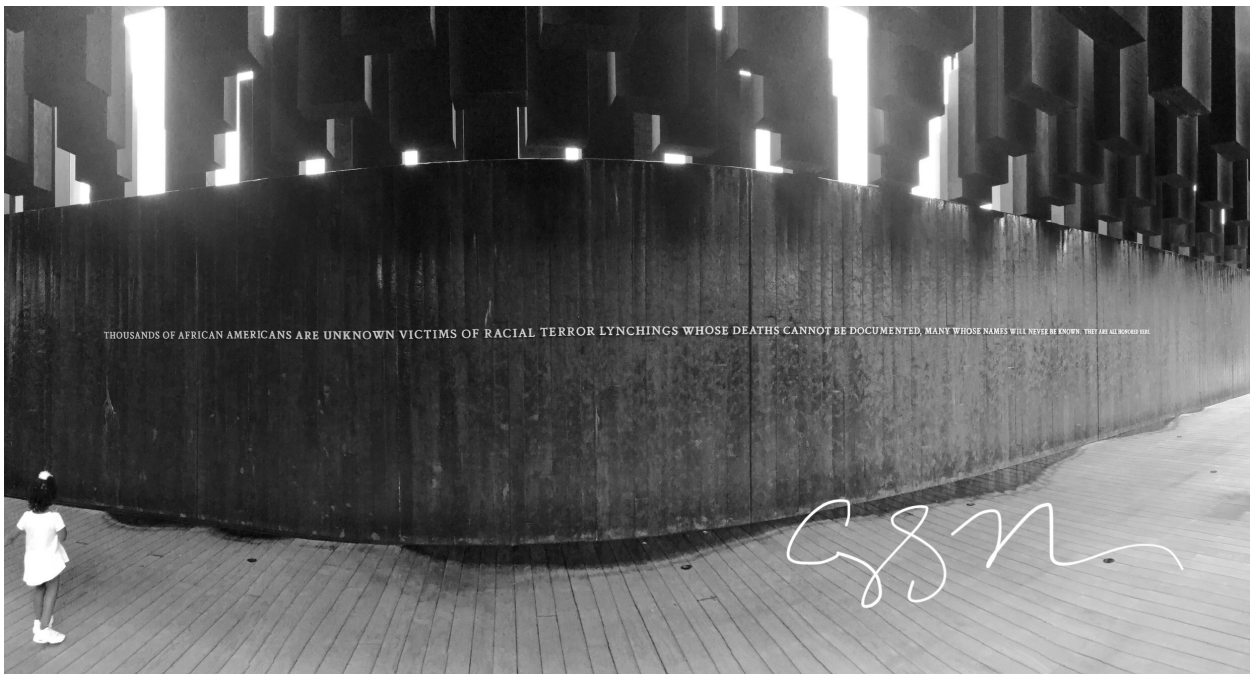
**“Stony the Road We Trod . . .” Institute 2019  
LESSON PLAN**

**Author of Lesson:** Ms. Cydney A. Neville, MAEd

**Group Concept:** Developing Racial Empathy

**Subject/Course:** Middle School English

**Lesson Plan Title:** Developing Empathy Through the Children’s Journey During the Civil Rights Movement, and Reflective Poetry



**Image:**

Photo: Taken by Cydney A. Neville, MAEd at the National Monument for Peace and Justice

**Brief Narrative:**

There is no age limit on leadership. During the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama, children led the fight against segregation. Many youths, as young as six years old, participated in the “Children’s Crusade,” a series of non-violent protests in Birmingham Alabama. Teenagers contributed greatly to sit-ins, and a host of other non-violent protests during the Movement.

Focusing on photographs that depict the children's advocacy, will make it easy for middle school children to connect and relate to their narratives and develop empathy. In addition, this lesson is part of an overarching Poetry unit, and connects across the History curriculum. Students will be required to tap into their background knowledge obtained in the Poetry unit and History class, to effectively create reflective poetry to respond to the images from the Civil Rights Movement, and demonstrate empathy.

**Guiding Questions for my lesson:**

1. How can you describe empathy?
2. How can it (empathy) enhance race relations today?
3. How can poetry be used to express empathy?
4. How can understanding historical events help you develop racial empathy?

**Learning Objectives**

Students will analyze photographs depicting children's journeys during the Civil Rights Movement, and demonstrate their ability to empathize through the creation of reflective poetry - utilizing a variety of poetic forms.

**Class Periods:**

This lesson will take two 90 minute class sessions.

**Lesson Plan Details should include:**

**College and Career Readiness Standards:**

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Preparation:**

As a warm up, have students share their definition of "Empathy." Students can post their

meanings of the term individually, on a Padlet, Google Class thread, index card, or small group/whole class discussion. Once everyone has had the opportunity to share their definition, ask them to discuss their answers in small groups. You may also ask the following:

1. How many syllables are in the word, “empathy?”
2. Identify the root word in “empathy.”
3. What is the meaning of the root word, “path?” “Path” is Greek for a feeling or disease
4. How many words can you think of, that use the same root word? Examples: sympathy, apathy...

### **Lesson Activities:**

1. Students will be provided a presentation that contains four photographs that are significant to children’s experiences during the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Students will be required to write a reflective poem based on each of the photos.
3. The reflective poems must demonstrate their comprehension of empathy.
4. Students may select from the following types of poetry for their reflective writing: sonnet, haiku, narrative, free-verse, concrete, couplets, elegy, diamante, cinquain (2, 4, 6, 8, 2).  
**Each type of poetry may only be used once.**

### **Assessment:**

1. Do your reflective poems correctly utilize the poetry style you selected?
2. Do each of your poems demonstrate your comprehension of empathy?
3. How has this lesson helped you to develop empathy for children who participated in the Civil Rights Movement?
4. Do you feel comfortable writing poetry in the formats covered in our Poetry unit?

### **Lesson Extensions:**

1. Students were provided nine types of poetry for the unit, and only four are needed to complete the lesson. As an extension, students may select up to three additional types of poetry, to create a reflective response.
2. Write a narrative poem, that utilizes the internal text structures of: compare & contrast, cause and effect, or Problem Solution. Analyze the children’s journeys during the Civil Rights Movement and draw on challenges with other cultures-past and present.
3. Create a power-point or prezi, that compares the empathetic points of view of George Wallace’s daughter and Fred Shuttlesworth’s daughters. Be sure to include a poem about the children of the Civil Rights Movement, that illustrates the empathy they have for their parents.
4. Using the image below, write a narrative poem about the orphaned enslaved children, who were used for labor on plantations and some through the convict leasing program. Be sure to model empathy:



5. Read the poem, *Invocation* by Elizabeth Alexander. Create a five to ten slide prezi or PowerPoint with images reflecting the poem.

**Reference Websites:**

Children's Crusade: <https://www.biography.com/news/black-history-birmingham-childrens-crusade-1963-video>

Ruby Shuttlesworth Bester video: <https://youtu.be/SZ0lipFzx0>

Peggy Wallace Kennedy video: <https://youtu.be/ZTQg0H7nnEU>

*Invocation*, by Elizabeth Alexander: <https://theodore-wheeler.com/tag/invocation-by-elizabeth-alexander/>

**Materials and Media:**

Prezi Presentation for student version of the assignment:

<https://prezi.com/view/P37cd7m5uCf42cG67HdW/>

Padlet.com

Google Classroom

Index Cards

Pens/pencils

Paper



Ph

oto courtesy of: eji.org