Ain't Nothin' Wrong with Gettin' Too Big for Your Britches: Empowering Students of Appalachia through Education

by

Leanna Blake Rippey

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Thesis Advisor: Dr. Daniel Woods

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Dr. Daniel Woods — Date 4-23-15
Thesis Advisor

Dr. Robert Williams — Date 4-23-15
Committee Member

Dr. Theresa Burriss — Date 4/23/15
Committee Member

Abstract

This work explores the complexities of Appalachia and the effects of the educational system on Appalachian students. Appalachian values and lifestyles are commonly misunderstood by many educators and individuals outside of the region. In the field of education, teachers tend to try and "fix" issues he/she may find, not realizing the importance of culture and heritage to the student. With majority cultures attempting to silence marginalized and minority cultures through education and standardization, many Appalachians and others distrust the educational system as a place that forces change. By learning more about the culture of students in the Appalachian classroom, teachers can encourage students to be proud of their cultural heritage through and in partnership with the English Language Arts (ELA) classroom. By using alternative teaching methods and an empowering, positive education, students of marginalized and minority cultures are given respect and acceptance for their valued cultural uniqueness.

Instead of continuing the marginalization of Appalachians and their views on education, this research further expands on educational progress by illustrating a series of lesson units that would effectively incorporate Appalachian literature, values, and culture into the secondary classroom. As an educated Appalachian teacher, it is important for students, no matter where in the world they may be, that they are comfortable and respected as they learn. Culture is a valued educational tool that can connect students, teachers, families, and the community into working together for students' success.

Dedication

There are many people I could dedicate the work of this thesis to, but one person stood out to me because she defined what it was like to be an Appalachian in my eyes. My granny, Cora "Kitty" Edwards, was a feisty, strong-willed, home cooking, Appalachian woman who became the teller of stories and the holder of hands. Her jokes, her crooked smile, and her memory are the driving forces of this thesis. I could only hope that she would be proud.

My grandmother's (the small girl in the middle) first photograph and the reason behind this work.

Acknowledgements

Before beginning, I would like to thank my thesis chair, Dr. Daniel Woods, for the years of putting up with my insanity. His constant encouragement may have come through jokes and dancing to Justin Bieber, but his help has been endless. The jokes and dance parties just made all this more fun.

To my committee of readers, Dr. Theresa Burriss and Dr. Robert Williams, I thank you for taking the time to offer suggestions, read my work, and encourage my project. I am forever grateful for all you have done.

Finally, to my loving parents who have survived my freak outs and panic attacks during my undergraduate and graduate schooling. May this be a new beginning.

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Chapter I: Lord Have Mercy: Teaching as an Appalachian

The first story I remember my grandmother telling me, my first "grown-up" story, was about how she grew up in a two-room house, sharing a bed with seven siblings, in the rural valley of Cana, Virginia. Honestly, I never believed this story until I was much older and saw one of the only photographs from my grandmother's youth. She was standing next to her house with her mother and three of her siblings, all without shoes, hair tousled and dirty, and a look of pure agony on her mother's face. Although this picture has a certain sadness, it also held considerable meaning because it was the humble beginnings of my grandmother in Appalachia.

Perhaps this story confirms so many beliefs people have of growing up in Appalachia, but this photograph told a story much more complex. Anyone could look at this photograph and assume it was a tragedy of living in Appalachia, and maybe those folks are correct. Even my life was not peaches and cream growing up in Appalachia. As her story continued, though, I learned the Baptist church lessons may be right because sometimes you have to struggle to find happiness.

Within the family histories, stories, and photographs shared with me by my grandmother and neighbors, the one thing that stays consistent is the connection to this place, Appalachia. Appalachia is not an easily pinpointed location on a map, especially since the area of Appalachia ranges from portions of New York to Mississippi (Edwards, Asbury, & Cox xiv). Resting in between those two states are Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. For this work, the Appalachian regions of Virginia and North Carolina will be the areas of focus.

The history of Appalachia is as rich as the lives of the generations that call this place home. Algonquian and Cherokee Indian tribes thrived in the Appalachian region for hundreds and maybe thousands of years (Wolfman 34). When settlers were coming into the New World in the seventeenth century, the upper east coast quickly became crowded. Many settlers decided to migrate south and west in search of a less crowded and more comfortable life. The Appalachian Mountains were the early settlers' destination. Even though the mountains were extremely rugged, the settlers soon discovered how abundant the wildlife was and how rich the valleys were for farming (Wolfman 34). This "goldmine" was home for many and they began building their lives in the Appalachian Mountains. The early settlers of Appalachia were of the Scottish, Irish, and German heritages. As they lived with one another, the dialects and cultures combined, creating an Appalachian culture and value system (Wolfman 34).

The stereotypes of Appalachia are obvious obstacles every student or individual from the region will likely face in some way or the other. Questions range from: "How did you graduate from college?," "Did your grandpa make moonshine?," "Did you drive a truck to school?," and even "Can you say that again, I didn't understand your accent?". Although these questions are based on the impression of the media and pop culture's power over television and print sources, students of Appalachia are unfairly assumed to be the same caricatures portrayed in today's comedy and TV.

I know these questions and stereotypes better than most. I am an educated Appalachian teacher and woman, and I have faced the same judgments throughout my life. Oh, my first day in a college class was a nerve-racking because I felt like my heart was going to explode out of fear. I had hoped to not have to speak because I knew my

accent would show through, but as soon as the teacher told us to announce our name and majors, I knew it was inevitable. I would not be given the opportunity to hide in this class behind written work; I would have to speak. Well, I did just that; I said my name, my major, and it was harmless. The class barely seemed to notice, or so I thought. The girl who sat in front of me, I still remember her name, turned and said that my accent was cute, but she hoped I could get rid of it because it made me sound like one of the most uneducated individuals she had ever heard speak. Try hearing that on your first day of college.

The moment my embarrassment from speaking out in this class ended was about three years later when I finally discovered a respect for who I am. I gained respect for my culture in an Appalachian Literature class, and I learned the importance of being a proud Appalachian. I was taught not to be ashamed of Appalachia, my dialect, or even the values I still held. Instead, the course was a time for me to accept my heritage and learn how to never hide who I am. I was excited and finally believed in myself and where I came from the way everyone should. I was no longer ashamed, but reenergized and able to finally understand the diversity of my culture. Throughout the semester and years since, I have come to realize how teaching students about the place they are from, having them research and learn more about their home, be it New York City, London, Nigeria, or Appalachia, can help them learn to accept their identities.

Although I dealt with a tough first year, trying to figure out how to come out of my shell, discovering who I wanted to be, Appalachian or not so much, I never regretted leaving my hometown in pursuit of a college degree. Many individuals in the Appalachian region have a distrust of education because they fear education encourages

people to leave the area or become different people when they return (Snyder 80). Education is not meant to be a wedge chipping away the person one may have been before for a more educated version. Education is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an enlightening experience, and it has been just that (Oxford English Dictionary n.p.). It has allowed me to be more open-minded and gave me the tools of listening, arguing, trust, and knowledge that will contribute to the learning I will achieve every day.

The role of education in my life has never been limited. My parents and grandmother continually encouraged me to succeed, but this may not be the case for many in the area. My father was forced to drop out of school in the eighth grade in order to help provide for his family. His mother struggled with a muscular disorder, his father was an alcoholic, and his four siblings all faced the same fate of taking care of one another. My mother graduated from high school early and pursued a career in a factory. When layoffs began to wrack many Appalachian homes, my mother went back to school to become a certified teacher's assistant. My grandmother, also a member of my household, quit school in the seventh grade to start her duties of cooking, gardening, and the caring for her younger siblings in the home. Her family consisted of eight children, a housewife mother, and a farmer father. Her life was never about being an empowered, educated woman, but to follow in the footsteps of thousands before her, tending the home.

Much later, my brother and I were challenged with the decision to take our own education into our hands. My brother, Joseph, held a much different opinion than I did. He hated school, graduated early, and began working a construction job with my father, a

job he would later hate and quit. I, on the other hand, would check my book bag a hundred times through the night to be sure I had finished all of my homework. I became a perfectionist, and the first member of my family to fill out the applications to go away to school.

My education was opening up the possibility of a future inside or outside of the region. In reality, learning ignited the courage in discovering how big the world is in comparison to my home of Cana, Virginia. Through gaining awareness, tolerance, and acceptance of diversity and a more open worldview, I realized education and knowledge were the keys I needed to accept myself as an Appalachian, woman, and teacher.

As I am now completing my second year of graduate study and have started the process of obtaining a full-time teaching position, I am more aware of the importance of teaching through the cultures in the classroom. Not only does this make education more relatable for the students and more engaging because the lessons and topics are on a familiar ground, teaching based on culture creates a better understanding of where students come from, harvesting a respect for their hometown and values, breaking through the stereotypes that so often cripple residents of Appalachian towns, and allowing students to make their own mature decisions about the place in which they live. Through alternative teaching methods, students will be provided with lessons that incorporate them sharing their rich ideas, telling their own stories, and discovering their personal identities.

Just as different as the area of Appalachia is, the inhabitants, ethnicities, backgrounds, histories, culture, economies, resources, and educational systems are also vastly different and multifaceted. As a future teacher, with a love for Appalachia and its amazing

resources developed by Appalachians, I question teaching methods that box students and teachers into learning and teaching in preparation for Standards of Learning tests and other federal requirements. Instead, I propose eliminating teaching to the test by using the beautifully crafted resources from those who understand the region the best, other Appalachians, and helping students unleash a new understanding and respect for the exquisitely stunning region in which they live. By using Appalachian writers' and artists' materials in the secondary classroom, along with alternative teaching practices, students are given a respect for their homes, which may just begin to change the worldview of Appalachia from the inside to a more pleasurable, enjoyable place.

Chapter II: Beginning an Old Conversation: Discussing Appalachia and Stereotypes

Appalachia is a place, a people, an idea, a culture, and it exists as much in the mind and imagination as on the map. While it can be defined in a number of ways depending upon the person defining it, its story is rich in everything that makes human history exciting and compelling. What ties mountain people together across the region is their shared geography, cultural traits, and common historical experience (Straw, Handbook to Appalachia 1).

From the first time I remember seeing one of my grandmother's only childhood pictures to the present day looking back at that photograph, I question what others would assume about my family's past and Appalachia in general. As Appalachia is riddled with negativity from popular television shows to many native Appalachians choosing to hide their heritage, my grandmother's photograph could tell a number of stories based on whoever was looking at it. Appalachia, the place, is just as complex.

Before one can delve into an understanding of any educational system, a reader, researcher, teacher, parent, and even the students, should first understand the place, culture, and how education can be used to rediscover the identity of each student in that classroom. In the case of Appalachia, stereotypes, myths, pop culture, and insiders and outsiders can blur the lines of what it means to be Appalachian or involved in a school system in Appalachia. To better understand how to empower students through knowledge and acceptance of the Appalachian region and the rich educational resources created by its inhabitants, people must learn to respect the many definitions of what Appalachia means.

In terms of Appalachia today, students of the region do not live as my grandmother did in the 1930s. In 1964, the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, endorsed by the Conference of Appalachian Governors, reinforced many of the popular stereotypes of Appalachia- "low income, high poverty, limited education, poor living standards, job deficits, high unemployment, outmigration, stagnation, and decline" (Abramson & Haskell xxiii). These stereotypes attempted to define a region as a whole, but generations of Appalachians, my grandmother's and my own, should not be limited or boxed into the stereotypes of a life of poverty or educational downfall.

The focus of today's Appalachian identity is due to the stereotypes that remain prominent in media, texts, and peoples' mindsets (Brosi 200). The stereotypes created by the media are disadvantages all Appalachians must face as they form their identity and decide to be proud of their region or silence their heritage. Identity is complex in its own right, the fact of trusting and becoming the person one wants to be and if choose to accept one's regional heritage and culture or not. Appalachia is even more descriptive, meaning different things to different people; all depending on one's response to the region (Elam 11). Often the unfavorable images created by the mass media cause some to disavow any form of Appalachian identity, while others will choose to embrace their Appalachian heritage in an attempt to change the perspective produced due to negativity and typecasts.

Embracing one's Appalachian identity means confronting the stereotypes, challenging them to give a truer image of what life in the region is, with no fictional instances or exaggerations (Cooper, Knotts, & Elders 458-459). Local Color writers created stock images of Appalachian people, images that still remain in popular culture. Those images were used in movies, television, comics, and other documents, with

Appalachians featured as “lanky, gun-toting, grizzle-bearded [men]” (Algeo 30). In many cases, these trends do not hamper the Appalachian identity; these outright stereotypes do not silence Appalachians from being proud of their heritage. Most Appalachians are aware of the trends and ideas held against them through all forms of media, and many resist the identity constructed for them by being positive role-models, by being educated individuals who speak out against these stereotypes, and even by being people who just choose to not accept the negativity and are proud to be from Appalachia (Algeo 53).

Contradictions about Appalachians being uneducated, ignorant members of society are only the beginning. Many outsiders and teachers hold negative attitudes toward the children and their families of Appalachia, and educators feel hopeless in their attempts to successfully teach them (Purcell-Gates 37). A major social construct against education in Appalachia is that Appalachian culture, as a whole, does not value education, that parents lack the ability and knowledge to effectively parent, and that students could not reach academic success (Purcell-Gates 37). Just as so many students are identified as uneducated based on the way they speak, Appalachians across the nation are being denied equal treatment and are subjected to negative opinions, not based on their education and goals, but the region they come from (Purcell-Gates 37).

Though these social constructs and stereotypes of lacking education are prominent, they are not reliable indicators for one’s journey towards discovering his or her identity, Appalachian or not. Although I often struggled with understanding my place as an Appalachian, I always considered myself a member of the region because my grandmother was proud to have been born and raised in the valleys of Cana, Virginia. This same grandmother, Granny Kitty, was the reason I have skills in canning and

preserving, trout fishing, and storytelling. Not only did she teach me about what it means to be an Appalachian, she also encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and be educated. She once said, "How can you expect others to give a hoot about us if you choose to not go out and learn about them." In many ways, the feelings I hold about my place is decided based on my family's foundation and the hard work we have dedicated to our history. This historicism refers to our "sense or understanding of one's place in history, within the family and region where one developed" (Snyder 82). In other words, my choice to identify positively as an Appalachian is based on the respect of my place and history and how it is accented by my sense of family, especially my grandmother (Snyder 83). For me to truly be a positive Appalachian, though, I had to be educated, to learn more, and help my future students understand the complexities of this great region, to redefine their views, to help each student find his or her own identity, and begin to make a difference in changing and rewriting what Appalachia can be, be it in the media or eyes of future generations of Appalachian children.

As a future educator from Appalachia, I will be responsible to confront both sides of the issue. I want to allow my students to see the hurtful stereotypes and understand that they do not have to be defined by them. I also desire to help my students become more connected with their culture and heritage through a critical consciousness that allows my students to form their own opinions about their region through research, personal experiences, and alternative teaching practices (Tabler 2013). Inherent in this struggle is the need to overcome the internal distrust of education that is only enhanced by the external problems that come from a curricula designed to support non-Appalachian culture, as students of marginalized and minority cultures lose the value of their heritage

and personal identities (Tabler 2013). As a future teacher and proud Appalachian, I owe it to my family, especially my grandmother, to help students of the region rediscover the Appalachian culture through the eyes of real and proud Appalachians.

To me, Appalachia is Sunday morning breakfast with a family and a grandmother, in a house built by the generations holding the same family name. As I wake up to the smell of bacon frying, the scent fills the house, and I hear the gravy spoon scraping the bottom of the cast iron pan that my granny grew up cooking in. Appalachia is the wrinkled hands of the past and the crying baby of the new addition. It's the mountains hairy with trees, the winding roads' weaving curves, and an old Ford truck. Appalachia is not what the TV makes you believe; it is not moonshine stills (although they do exist here) or crazy rednecks killing one another. Instead, close your eyes and imagine a world of endless hills, calm laughter at the local produce market as the old men sit back and play music. To me, Appalachia is more than a place on a map. It's my home, even if I one day choose to leave it.

Nancy Taylor, a faculty member of Radford University's English department, describes Appalachia through the eyes of an outsider moving in. She writes,

> I'm a "transplant" [sic: quotes in the original] to this area and for 34 years now I have called Appalachia home. I have lived here longer than I lived in SC so I feel like Appalachia belongs to me as well. What Appalachia means to me personally is to have a genuine love for the mountains and all they contain: vegetation, wildlife, four seasons, creeks and rivers, the people and the cultures. I grew up in the flat lands of SC, but I literally fell in love with mountains when I was nine and made my first trip into the mountains of SC and NC (Taylor 20 January 2015).

Although Ms. Taylor is an outsider, her time and dedication to this region have made it her home. "Appalachian" is not strictly defined as a person born and raised in a particular region but the passion and love for the mountains, culture, and people from the place.

Along with the many positive values and thoughts about Appalachia, others, even insiders of the region, hold a much different view of the place. Andrew Akers, a fellow graduate student and native Appalachian, feels differently about the region he has always called home. For example, Andrew Akers describes the Appalachian region as being a culture oppressed by the media and other negative stereotypes. He writes,

> The negative stereotypes often provoke or encourage new generations of Appalachians that the culture is merely a glorification of ignorance, leading them to discard the culture that is passed down to them. This began on the peripherals of the area, and has slowly progressed like a cancer to the heart of Appalachia. In many ways, Appalachian culture is suffering the hegemonic phase of oppression by the rest of American culture, which simply wants it to go away (Akers, 20 January 2015).

He is correct in his discussion of the negative stereotypes forced on the region through media and other advertising, Todd Snyder, author of *The Rhetoric of Appalachian Identity,* confirms this point by adding, "Appalachians are cloaked in everything outsiders have been taught to believe about this particular region" (Snyder 5). The truly sad part of this fact is that many Appalachians have even begun to believe the negative stereotypes about themselves, a rhetoric and lifestyle they both reject and consciously (and subconsciously) uphold. Some Appalachians are filled with doubt about

their culture and history, replaced by inappropriate jokes and insensitive remarks (Snyder 5-6). Education is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is one of the most important opportunities for students to become alive with engagement in and discovery of their own culture, identity, and dreams.

Beth McCauley-Jewel's life in Appalachia is painted by "beautiful mountains," but that description is limply inadequate to capture so much more than what your physical senses absorb. It is a deep, intrinsic feeling of awe and wonder at the majesty and miracle of God's creation" (McCauley-Jewel 2015). In Appalachia, even amidst the dangers nature's forces can yield, there is a strong and deep sense of peace, comfort, and belonging to something far greater than one's self (Mc-Cauley-Jewel 2015). The stereotypes, media, and tensions fail to mention these very aspects of Appalachia, darkening the culture based on unrealistic thoughts and caricatures illustrating the history, written by outsiders.

Defining Appalachia

As difficult as it is to define "Appalachia," how can one even assume education in Appalachia is one-dimensional, black and white? Appalachia is much deeper, with many different hues of what it means to each person, insider and outsider. As diverse as these definitions are, teachers must approach positive and negative perspectives to even hope for respect for this culture in their classrooms and for their students to make their own decisions about Appalachia and their educations. How could one even begin to process what education and its complexities mean in a region so deeply diverse? To find common ground with students, teachers, must learn to respect how each person feels about this region, and empower students to see Appalachia as more than an area in which

they were forced to grow up, but a place and people with a great history and greater potential.

Chapter III: Broken Fences and the Cows Ran Off: Distrust of Education through the Lenses of Students, Families, and Educators

The story of my grandmother's photograph is a simple one. Her mother was stressed because her husband was in prison for a crime against his own brother, and she

was raising four children on her own in 1931. My great grandmother was worried because a traveling man came with a camera to take photographs of the families in Cana, Virginia. She couldn't bring herself to be comfortable in trusting a stranger around her children, but she desired to document the growth of her family and the story of my grandmother's humble beginnings. In spite of her distrust, a photograph was taken that began the story of my family.

In terms of education, what does distrust mean? How are students, teachers, and their families affected by the negative stereotypes in such a way that it creates this fear of students becoming educated and losing their cultural values? In many cases, students are so often stifled in their education because teachers may not have the funding or interest to teach, parents are fearful of education's opportunities for academic growth and continuing their education, and students fear the stereotypes will follow them (Sleeter & Grant 48). Due to these fears, a distrust of education continues, causing many native Appalachians to question if education plays a positive role in the region or if it does more harm for the growth of younger Appalachians (Sleeter & Grant 48-49). Often times, the distrust of education branches very deeply into marginalized and minority cultures because they are not the culture of power. The indoctrination of marginalized and minority students in and through education is designed to force these individuals to feel undeserving or inadequate because they do not have the money, power, or acceptance as cultures deemed suitable by the individuals in control. One way to address this distrust is by teaching students to explore and deconstruct the structure of education as created by the dominant social group through alternative, engaging teaching practices that allow them to discover the value of their Appalachian identities.

Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant describe the importance of education based on how central knowledge is in relation to power. They write, “Knowledge helps us envision the contours and limits of our own existence, what is desirable and possible, and what actions may bring about those possibilities” (Sleeter & Grant 50). With the incredible pressure of media outlets, television shows, generations of stereotypes smothering Appalachian culture, powerful influences and public perceptions have changed the route of education in schools (Sleeter & Grant 51). Teachers are more likely to silence signs of an Appalachian dialect, only allow conversations and writing related to topics discussed in school, and refuse creative activities that involve self-exploration and culture (Sleeter & Grant 51).

In 2005, students from the Appalachian region graduating with at least a high school diploma is resting at 53.2 percent, while the national average is 80.4 percent (Shaw, DeYoung, & Rademacher 312-313). Through critical literacy knowledge and teaching students through alternative educational methods, it becomes possible that “If you believe in your students, they can learn.” In the current education system, which caters to dominant cultures and silences marginalized and minorities, the idea that every student can learn is tossed from the classroom windows, and students, their families, and other educators are at a loss in even beginning to trust the educational system in charge of changing the views, stereotypes, and opportunities for Appalachian students in today’s schools (Shaw, DeYoung, & Rademacher 312).

Although education is not always trusted and the dropout rates for Appalachians remain high, with nearly 40 percent to 75 percent of students not attending school on a regular basis (Central Appalachia 58), with absence rates that are more than twice that of

many systems as a whole (Purcell-Gates 33), education is still a valued part of a student's life (Purcell-Gates 33). Education is not meant to alienate or cause riffs in families of students; education is meant to function as an instrument which is used to facilitate and teach students the logic and knowledge of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, allowing for creativity, and the discovery of how to participate in and transformation their world (Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed)* (Snyder 74).

In Appalachian school systems, federal funding is typically reduced because the number of students and the overall population of the region determine the amount of funding given by the state and federal government. A recent report, published by Rutgers University, announced Minnesota schools receive over 30 percent more funding than schools in Virginia from the federal government, with many other Appalachian states receiving much less (Baker, Sciarra, & Farrie 2014). Many systems have even noted lowering the funding for poor districts from 42 percent in 2009 to a mere 7 percent in 2011, which confirms that many schools, not limited to Appalachia, are failing to adequately invest in children's educational needs (Baker, Sciarra, & Farrie 2014). With funding being reduced, new programs and technology are not issued, which maintains an older, more traditional learning environment, one that is proven to be less effective in comparison to modern schooling techniques. Through less effective teaching and lack of funding, students, parents, and educators are facing a dilemma of students struggling to keep up with the ever-changing educational expectations from the majority culture and standardization of learning (Sleeter & Grant 51-52). These students develop a distrust because the lack of investment in their learning results in outdated teaching methods and

less engaging activities, which creates environments of lower motivation for students (Sleeter & Grant 51-52).

In order to process and change the face of education in Appalachia, to start to help students, parents, families, and educators to see what education can bring to a region, changes in structure and curriculum need to take place. In the book, *Teaching Diverse Populations: Formulating a Knowledge Base,* the authors suggest that labeling and creating distrust through leveling and tracking creates differential treatment of students, ultimately creating a divide in what and how students learn (Hollins, King, & Hayman 70). By changing the Appalachian school system to a cooperative learning system, which is proven as a more effective learning environment, students work together with teachers and the community to reach academic success and to begin changing the traditional, ineffective teaching practices, which in turn, creates a more trusting learning environment (Hollins, King, & Hayman 70). A comparative study completed about the effects of non-traditional learning proved students taught with cooperative learning and non-traditional strategies performed better than those taught with individualistic and traditional learning strategies (Saleh 25). Groups of students taught through relevant learning dealing with their culture scored 89.91 percent as compared with 79.75 percent for the groups taught in more traditional ways on all content areas standardized tests (Saleh 25). With a focus shift from traditional, skill-level learning, to a more cooperative learning base, education for each student becomes more individualized through techniques of empowering, relatable lessons. By placing student needs first, and allowing teachers and students to work together to discover success based on prior knowledge and culture, students are proven to score higher on tests and in academic success.

Students' Views of Education in Appalachia

At a young age, students are often taught about the positive attributes of their culture. During their childhoods, many Appalachian children are encouraged to become hard workers and be connected to the land. Family, community, and religion also deeply shape their values.

But this changes as they grow older. Some students of Appalachia are taught that "fancy folks" from the city think they are stupid hillbillies (Snyder 32). Society looks down on them, so Appalachians are commonly taught a defensive posture in order to combat the views others hold. Students from Appalachia are often encouraged by teachers to mask their accents, cultures, and heritage, especially when taught that Appalachian values and views could stifle future opportunities for college and careers.

In many ways, education is designed to exclude marginalized and minority groups. Michael Apple explains, "Schools do not only control people; they also help control meaning" (Apple 63). Schools are founded on knowledge that is accepted by those of wealth and power, the dominant culture. This knowledge is known as "legitimate knowledge," which becomes the knowledge that every student must have (Apple 63-64). Students of marginalized and minority groups are not members of the accepted culture so schools often deny cultural legitimacy to these students because of their heritage or background. All in all, a specific group attempting a standardization of the knowledge for all people is not based on discovering a respect for individual cultures or even students of a specific region; it is related to a particular group's power and wealth in the larger educational arena that allows one group to be given the tools necessary to silence culture in schools (Apple 63).

Students often struggle with distrust and fears of education due to their sense of localism (Snyder 81). This attitudinal characteristic is also a direct link to one's willingness or unwillingness to leave home one day to attend or continue school (Snyder 82). More specifically, the "I'm afraid of leaving home" speech is based on the fear of failure if students were to ever attempt to leave. Leaving home is difficult and sometimes heartbreaking for learners, even those who have been lucky enough to have been encouraged by their families on their educational journeys (Purcell-Gates 81). As a student, education creates a fear of "getting above our raisings," a phrase illustrating an alienation from family and home as a result of literacy attainment, formal education, or a return to school (Locklear 2). "Getting above our raisings" may be an Appalachian phrase, but students all over the nation struggle with continuing their education because of the feeling of education pushing them ahead of their family or community, forcing them to forget their previous identity (Lynger n.p.).

Teachers can work to actively combat these concerns by teaching students the truth of their histories and cultures, encouraging them to ask the tough questions, and empowering students to continually rediscover the power of education. As students gain an enhanced understanding of their own culture, they also achieve new ways to respect and connect to their cultures that was not possible without first being educated. By becoming an educated member of society, students are able to share experiences, advocate against the negative issues and stereotypes riddled in the media and even in their homes, and communicate more broadly for change and empowerment (Locklear 11). By first educating students about Appalachia, teachers help students appreciate

education for what it has to offer them as individual learners, even if they plan to enter the workforce following high school.

Education should not be viewed as a harsh environment directed at destroying the culture and community foundation of the students. Instead, education should use the identities of each student as a teaching tool, one that allows education to become more personal and individualized. By viewing the negatives and combating the stereotypes with positive views and respect of Appalachian students and culture, regional students begin to change their defensive posture to a more positive, prepared, and respectful disagreement, a start that could ultimately change the mainstream by encouraging students to see themselves differently with a deeper respect for who they are (Locklear 12). Through the richness of using culture and fostering a new understanding through education, students and teachers discover that "there's no one story of Appalachia, no one voice. It's time for everyone to feel like they can speak up, like their story is important." (Baird, n.p.).

Parent/Guardian and Familial Distrust

Familial relationships have goals of being personal, involved, and equal (Webb-Sunderhaus 7). Often times, when students, even at the secondary level, become engaged with schools and learning, their families respond with negative attitudes. For example, children exposed to parents who display achievement and positive attitudes towards education and provide educational opportunities are more likely to develop the belief that achievement is to be valued (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann 229-230). On a much different note, students who are facing familial issues or economic hardships are typically more pessimistic about their educational successes (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann 230). Many

parents and guardians believe the attainment of education creates a divide between generations because the younger generation is acquiring knowledge that others in the region may deem "unnecessary." Although families may appear supportive and be encouraging sponsors of their students' literacies, some of these same individuals also worked to inhibit the students' emerging literacy beliefs and practices (Webb-Sunderhaus 7). Why is this? Why do many parents and families support education but also work to hinder it in the lives of Appalachian students?

In reality, the answer to those questions has many layers. Literacy, particularly academic literacy, creates "dangerous" changes in the eyes of many families, changes that could distance students from parents/guardians and loved ones (Webb-Sunderhaus 15). Thus, in small-town Appalachia, education often entails relocation for career paths requiring a college education. In many Appalachian towns, students are encouraged to work after graduating high school, which opens up job opportunities for youth members that require only minimum education to function within their respective communities. Based on this alone, many students, especially those from working families, feel obligated to continue the work of their parents or family, pushing education aside or to not see the worth of being successful in school (Bryan & Simmons 401-402). Due to this lack of educational support and many families' struggle to make it, some parents blatantly and sometimes inadvertently discourage their children from pursuing education further than high school (Snyder 99). Although there are negative ideas about education, many parents and families encourage educational progress. Parents see to it that their students have all the opportunities they may not have had, especially the families who

often struggled to pay bills and worked far too much to see each other on a regular basis (Snyder 97).

This is where educators and students should step in, encouraging students to take control of their education and to show parents the relatability and positive changes education can bring to local community. With so many families from Appalachia lacking trust in education, particularly secondary and post-secondary studies, schools should implement family literacy programs or meetings to discuss the progress of learning. By involving parents and guardians in the learning progress, students and parents begin to work together to learn more, become engaged in what is being taught, bringing new ideas into the classroom, creating a more inviting and supportive environment, and helping negative thoughts to be cleared with an attainment of education (Purcell-Gates 199). By inviting them to play an active role in their student's education and learning, parents feel less worried about their child being brainwashed and more encouraged and empowered by the strength and voice given to their student(s) through education.

Researchers studying the Appalachian school system are not the only ones worried about the growth of education. Research suggests that the educational success of students is commonly linked directly to parents' views on learning, degree level, and current employment status (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann 225-226). Students are motivated and encouraged by the status of their parents or guardians. The parents, guardians, and families of these students often teach their children the importance of family and community; many of these families discuss how leaving the community is practically abandoning all the family has made and helped create for the student (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann 227). Todd Snyder describes this further by explaining, to leave the

community, even to attend college, work, or other educational programs, is to leave the rest of the family behind and adopt a change in values (Snyder 81).

As with any parents or guardians sending their children to school or dropping them off on their first day of college, there is always a concern about how education may affect or change someone. Although family members can be some of the most important supporters of educational pursuits, many students often face strife from their families as students begin to take education and the lessons they are gaining more seriously (Snyder 81). One of the most common concerns parents and families have due to the pursuit of an education are the expenses and how they will afford class activities, the rising interest of the students in certain subjects, and the possibility of continuing education towards a college degree (Snyder 82).

The fear of expenses are only the beginning for many families. Family members and parents fear that education is a process of brainwashing students in order to change the cultural, religious, and familial ideals shared by a family or group (Snyder 104). Erica Locklear explains a presentation Lee Smith, an Appalachian writer, attended and how she talked to a mother of an Appalachian student. Smith recalls the event as follows: "I said, 'I guess you're just really proud of your daughter,' and [the mother] just burst into tears. She said, 'It won't never be the same after this.' She said, 'She'll go off, and then she'll come back and she won't know us no more.'" (Locklear 1). The fear of educational achievement that many parents and family members struggle with is the idea of education equaling an escape from Appalachia. This fear can be unrealistic in many ways because 69 percent of educated Appalachians return or continue to work in Appalachia (Locklear 2).

Much of the research published about familial sponsors of education is positive because many Appalachians do encourage academic success for their students (Webb-Sunderhaus 20). Parents are also more aware now of how important a college degree is when obtaining a sustainable paying job (Webb-Sunderhaus 19). Often times, education is not thought of as being a threat but an opportunity for Appalachian students to reach their full potential and discover success.

Educators' Distrust and Views on Appalachian Education

Students and families may have a reason to distrust education and the progress it gives future generations. The most complex, complicated, and confusing piece of the educational puzzle is when faced with educators who lack support of nontraditional or diverse students in the classroom. Todd Snyder tells the story of a professor half-jokingly discussing how this professor's Appalachian students were on the path to becoming grocery baggers and ditch diggers (Snyder 89). This same teacher had publically announced that kids from Appalachian educational systems typically goofed off during school and that it would be difficult for anyone from a region, like Appalachia, to catch up with the rest of the group (Snyder 90). In fact, this teacher was wrong on many levels. He should have been a supportive educator, but he chose to rely on the negative stereotypes of Appalachian students and the region in forming his opinions. The only educational goals left out of many Appalachian students' schooling is that they (students) are quite often left out of the multicultural conversation and are in need of being respected and liberated through their learning and education (Snyder 94). The students from Appalachia know and understand the stereotypes of the region, and it becomes the role and responsibility of the educators and teachers to reshape those negative stereotypes

into knowledge and positive history and cultural lessons of students' backgrounds and regional accomplishments.

Many teachers also believe students from Appalachia are ignorant and unable to learn at the same pace as other students across the nation (Snyder 94). It has been noted that outsiders of the region and teachers, inside and outside of the region, hold overall negative attitudes toward children and their families of Appalachia, and educators feel hopeless in their attempts to successfully teach them (Purcell-Gates 37). Victoria Purcell-Gates released a study about the negative ideals on Appalachians in education and quoted a secondary teacher of urban Appalachia saying, "These people don't care about education, or are genetically unfit, or cannot even speak correctly, much less learn to read and write Standard English" (Purcell-Gates 3). Even though teachers may hold such negative views of education or the students in the classroom, the restraints each individual teacher feels due to increasingly stiff instructional practices enforced by administrators and policy makers, teachers still have the responsibility to be positive role models who do not give up on any student's success.

Chapter IV: Lipping Full the Minds of Our Children: Empowering Education in Appalachia

I now want to help students recognize, use and enlarge their own perspectives in relation to the themes of the courses, as well as to present views reflecting a fuller range of male and female lives…I seek to build a more complex conceptualization of a given issue, one

that legitimizes students' voices and puts them in a larger explanatory context (Sleeter21).

With all the problems, issues, financial burdens, and difficulties of Appalachian schools, should teachers and educators not be shifting to promote more effective school movements and programs for Appalachian students? Additionally, with such a strong distrust of education in Appalachia, it becomes the responsibility of teachers, educators, and school administrators to find effective methods of teaching and engaging students and the community.

Teachers can work toward these goals by adopting empowering educational goals and programs, programs that focus on student-centered success, using the community and environment of the students to help them connect with their learning, and build educational successes through cultural learning. By delving deeper into the personal lives and connections of the students, by using their culture and heritage as a teaching tool, students are pushed to better understand the beauty of this place but also the possibilities opened by education. Educators should encourage the rediscovery of Appalachia through the eyes and minds of Appalachia's youth, better preparing them to combat the stereotypes and negativity in search of a personal journey through their heritage and culture in the classroom (Apple 64). Education is not meant to be based on standardization and traditional methods, but instead a more individualized, personalized, and engaged system where all students are given the education they deserve (Apple 64).

Students can respect and care more about the work they are doing in school if the materials are relevant, and if students are allowed to bring their own experiences into the school to be affirmed and legitimated (Hollins, King, & Hayman 76). Through a

curriculum built on mutual respect and self-discovery, students leave at the end of the day with a feeling of self-worth knowing they have the power to contribute and play an active role in their school, family, and community (Hollins, King, & Hayman 76). Is this type of learning environment not exactly what schools should strive for? The structure of education built by the majority culture so often limits students from finding their creativity and personal stories (Hollins, King, & Hayman 77), but alternative teaching practices and even traditional learning methods based on culture allow students to share their backgrounds, to write about their own experiences, and discover that their biases and the negative stereotypes do not define them as individuals. By engaging students through alternative teaching, educators can begin the process of changing the perception with the youth and future voices, the students from Appalachia.

In the English Language Arts (ELA) classroom, culture can be used to help students discover a personal connection to texts, writing activities, and other class plans (Snyder 80). Teachers should celebrate students and their culture, use it as a stepping stone to the English classroom to make learning more personal and relevant, while also teaching the requirements of an English Language Arts education. By learning about Appalachia, students of the region explore their experiences, inviting students, teachers, and families to consider their own beliefs, expectations, and thoughts. By using Appalachian culture in the English Language Arts classroom, the students can connect with the required materials, but use their heritage outside of the school to make decisions and share their growing knowledge with a much bigger audience of their school, classmates, family, and community (Snyder 80). For example, if students are reading Lou Crabtree's short story collection, *Sweet Hollow,* students can focus on how the stories

relate to their own lives. Students can then explore their local community or family history to gather information on how accurate the text is, what activities were completed in the text that their grandparents or parents may have participated in, and discover stories they may not have been aware of without reading a cultural text. Students could interview and record their family stories, sharing them with their classmates for a better understanding of how lives intertwine and yet are different.

The English Language Arts classroom can become a more engaging and interactive place by exploring the culture and heritage of Appalachians and using alternative teaching methods to reignite a respect for their Appalachian identity. Through alternative teaching methods like Social Emotional, collaborative, empowered, place-based, and non-traditional learning, students can become more engaged because their education does not silence their culture but highlights its value by exploring the gems of Appalachian literature, family stories, and history of this place. These alternative learning strategies strongly influence how students and educators will treat others and how they can approach challenges like learning new content, which in turn can begin to shape and change the Appalachian community and outside world by giving our students a positive, proud voice.

Teaching Model 1: Social Emotional Learning

Before implementing a full-scale educational overhaul, it is important for teachers and educational systems to consider programs meant to help students better understand their selves and their place in school, their families, and the community. One way in

which education can cater more to students' unique situations is the implementation of Social Emotional Learning, also known as SEL (Edutopia 2015). Social Emotional Learning is an educational process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to more clearly understand and manage emotions, positive goals and changes, respectful emotions towards and for one other, establish and maintain positive relationships, and become responsible decision makers in their community and school (CASEL 2014). This learning method is important because it creates the academic environment of placing students and their learning first. Students are provided with the knowledge, respect, and skill base to begin to become active citizens in their community.

By pairing this learning method in the English Language Arts classroom with Appalachian values and customs of the region, students are allowed to bring their own personal histories and heritage into the classroom, encouraged to process and better understand their relationships, and become active citizens for change in their Appalachian community. Students participating in social emotional learning will also be faced with the negativity surrounding the Appalachian region, better grasping how to route their emotions and disagreements with the media and other sources into a more positive mode of change. Students will discuss stereotypes and other Appalachian tropes in order to discover more positive outlets and to open up a more positive conversation.

Dr. Maurice Elias, of Rutgers University, created fifteen skills necessary to successfully implement social emotional learning in the classroom. Out of these fifteen, included are fifteen methods that could be successful in the application of these skills in

the Appalachian classroom. Provided below are the fifteen skills designed by Dr. Elias (Elias 53-63):

1. "Recognizing emotions in self and others"

   In the Appalachian classroom, by allowing students to write and connect to lessons and literature based on their personal connections, students could begin to see how their own lives relate to or are different from characters or other people, beginning the process of analyzing cultural similarities and differences.

2. "Regulating and managing strong emotions (positive and negative)"

   By discussing stereotypes of Appalachia, many feelings of students and parents may be hurt based on the negative views so many outsiders hold thanks to the media and publications. It is crucial to discuss this negativity in order to help students become more informed and mature individuals when facing the strife and stereotypes forced on the region. By learning about these negative feelings, students can then begin the process of being more active and positive citizens, proving the stereotypes wrong or misguided.

3. "Recognizing strengths and areas of need"

   In an advocacy unit shaped around the needs of Appalachia, specifically the region of the school, students research deep into a topic or issue, learning as much as they can about it, and then they can create a plan of action. In this lesson, they become active citizens with mature voices for change, not just students fighting with the lack of any plans.

4. "Listening and communicating accurately and clearly"

This lesson could be taught with any unit plan, but this could be extremely successful with a unit on Appalachian advocacy. By having students discuss the issues or concerns they have about their community, by researching and talking to parties involved, students learn mature communication and problem-solving skills, and students also see how action can affect the local community.

5. "Taking others' perspectives and sensing their emotions"

   Lessons 4, 5, and 6 are all working together to create a respectful learning environment, one founded and based on respectful listening and mature discussions about the local community and culture.

6. "Respecting others and self and appreciating differences"

7. "Identifying problems correctly"

   Students are members of any community. The children are the future generations of the region, so students should be allowed to explore the issues and concerns of their local communities, seeking out what aspects they hope to change in their lives and schooling.

8. "Setting positive and realistic goals"

   The students, teachers, and community will be working together on projects, all while learning what is possible in changing or affecting the growth of their selves and community.

9. "Problem solving, decision making, and planning"

Students, teachers, and community members will be discovering and researching the community, history, social and other issues, all while also finding their place and respect for their homes. The students will be in control of their own learning, given choice in many of the learning goals taking place. Teachers will create the bridging connections between school and the outside world, especially in contacting and creating community support. And the community will also be thinking of engaging ideas and environments that are welcoming and stimulating for students to learn and be a part of.

10. "Approaching others and building positive relationships"

    Students, teachers, and the community will be encouraged to share stories, learn new things about one another, and to bring about change in the local community.

11. "Resisting negative peer pressure"

    Students will be educated about stereotypes and where they may stem from. In this unit, students will learn how to become more positive or even just understand their communities on a broader scale, not just through the stereotypes.

12. "Cooperating, negotiating, and managing conflict nonviolently"

    Students, as they learn more about stereotypes, will learn and discuss how they will, hopefully, change the mindset of their peers. By learning and becoming educated on thoughts and stereotypes of Appalachia, students will

then be more aware when leaving the community, or even for staying a part of it, and will know how to more positively change the mindsets of others.

13. "Working effectively in groups"

Throughout the entire school year, students will be encouraged to work in groups with their classmates. During place-based activities or community-centered events, students will better learn to work with members of the community and school to gain knowledge and skills.

14. "Help-seeking and help-giving"

Students will help one another learn in group situations, and students will become more aware of how to become more active players in their communities. Hopefully, by creating a cooperative learning environment, focusing on students' emotional and physical connection to place and acceptance of their homes, students will feel empowered to give back to their community.

15. "Showing ethical and social responsibility"

As mentioned previously, by giving students choice and encouragement, teachers and the community can enlighten students and empower them to become members of the community. When students learn more about their community, they feel more connected and respectful, creating a place and cooperative environment that students can be proud of. This could also allow students who leave the community to better understand how their home affected their personal growth and desire to make a difference.

Teachers are not limited to the goals set forth by Dr. Elias. Social Emotional Learning can happen naturally in the secondary classroom, and teachers should take these opportunities to create a more positive, social, and accepting environment in their classrooms. Teachers can create Social Emotional acceptance in their classrooms through methods of effective and direct classroom instructions, student engagement in all activities, parental involvement, students and the community in planning, and evaluating and implementing social emotional behaviors into the classroom (Elias 58-60). For example, students could study and research local issues or stereotypes created by the media and campaign for a solution. Students could work individually or in groups to redefine stereotypes of ignorance by writing a well-researched essay, positive advertisements, or events with local talents and writers to display the positive aspects of Appalachia that are often forgotten or not shown in the media. Projects of this caliber are designed to give students confidence in their culture by allowing them to analyze the positive attributes of their culture and heritage. By generating a positive classroom environment, where students are able to discuss their culture and gain confidence in areas where they may not have been so confident, such as their Appalachian roots, students become more comfortable with their identities, which leads to more success in their studies and relationships.

Research and successful programs prove Social Emotional Learning, or SEL, can improve behaviors in the school environment positively while reducing all forms of negative behaviors (CASEL 2014). For example, students who are encouraged through learning related to them in some way, like learning family history and sharing it with

their class, are more likely to pay attention and believe their learning is meaningful and has a purpose (CASEL 2014). On the opposite end of the spectrum, negative behaviors are also greatly reduced, even those of conduct problems and emotional distress. Furthermore, social and emotional skills are important because they are skills that will be necessary throughout their lives to lead to successes (CASEL 2014).

Schools and classrooms that have implemented Social Emotional projects at the core of their pedagogy have noted less violence, increased self-esteem, improved ability and motivation to help others, and greater personal responsibility and problem-solving skills (Stern 2014). Even more impressive is how these programs produced substantial improvements in student motivation, dropout rates, attendance, and suspension rates (Stern 2014). Self-understanding and greater emotional management through social emotional learning programs, in addition to students having a more accepting and encouraging attitude, positively impacts the school's capacity to negotiate the everyday lives of their students.

How this teaching model is successful in the classroom is best explained by the foundation creating many Social Emotional teaching practices, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Through Social Emotional Learning, students have a deeper understanding of the subject matter, learning in a collaborative environment that allows for a more complex engagement. Students are provided with choices, the opportunity to share their own unique stories, and are not forced to only study the assessments required (Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnik, and Elias 467). Students are more likely to be interested in school and less likely to use negative behaviors because students are being encouraged through

education to learn more about themselves and their community. Social Emotional learning programs are linked to improved academic performance and educational outcomes, including a 14 percent increase on standardized tests (CASEL 2014). SEL results are better predictors of success than IQ and technical skills combined, based on a study published by CASEL (CASEL 2014). This positive promotion of learning and academic achievement through pride of local heritage is one solution that reinvigorates the stagnant education so many students are receiving today.

Students who are encouraged to better understand themselves, especially by researching and discovering their own unique place, history, and communities, tend to enjoy education on a more profound level (Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnik, and Elias 468). Students are learning things relevant to their own lives, and they become empowered members of the community, members who are heard and have a voice, even if it's just in the classroom of the school. When students are given opportunities to see and study the aspects of their culture that is typically not seen, like local writers, talented musicians, and successful business owners, students are given a more realistic and positive worldview of their culture (Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnik, and Elias 468-469). Students' ideals are not polluted by the media and stereotypes but reenergized by the talents and intelligence of others sharing their culture and values. Through Social Emotional Learning, students are given a basis for becoming active, positive members of the community, members willing to gain a better understanding and to have a stronger voice to positively change their lives, school, community, families, and even the outsiders' views of Appalachia.

Although Social Emotional Learning is not the "be all, end all" key to education, it is an excellent tool toward creating a classroom environment that is positive and accepting of all students. With the hope of teaching about Appalachia by using the culture, stereotypes, familial histories, etc., students will need to be aware and respectful of all lessons and activities, and Social Emotional Learning will lead up to a positive program of study about Appalachian culture. By centering the classroom environment on being open, trusting, and conversationally based, students are more likely to have a positive voice, participation, and desire to change the worldview about their home, Appalachia.

Teaching Model 2: Cooperative Learning

Students' and teachers' learning goals can be structured to promote three major types of instruction: cooperative, competitive, or individualistic (Johnson and Johnson, Cooperative Learning: Two Heads 1). In every classroom, instructional activities are aimed at accomplishing goals, but this could be taken one step further. If students were encouraged through a positive, relevant classroom environment to connect and work with one another, learning goals would demonstrate a clearer competence and mastery in the subject area being studied (Johnson and Johnson, Cooperative Learning: Two Heads 1-2). In the ideal classroom, all students would learn how to work cooperatively with others, compete for fun and enjoyment, and work autonomously on their own. Through this type of learning, cooperative-based instruction, students in any classroom could learn to relate to one another based on commonalities of their cultures, families, and stories of the region. In the English Language Arts classroom, pair and group reading would be a successful cooperative learning technique (Slavin 362). Groups of students would be

reading different Appalachian texts with each group completing a presentation on the book, discussing and researching the ways Appalachian culture was displayed in the book, and work together to organize and present a project about the book. Students would cooperatively design a project for the class and each student would have his or her individual parts to complete for the project, all while learning more about his or her cultural backgrounds.

Cooperation is simply defined as working together to accomplish shared goals. Within a cooperative-based classroom, students discover outcomes that are positive for themselves and beneficial to other group members or classmates (Johnson and Johnson, Cooperative Learning: Two Heads 1). Cooperative learning is built on the instructional use of small groups, allowing students to work together, maximizing their own learning while also gaining knowledge from others in the class (Slavin 363). It may be contrasted with competitive (students work against others to achieve an academic goal) and individualistic (students work by themselves to accomplish learning goals) learning, but using all three with the other would help in building a cooperative classroom.

By using the common culture of students in Appalachia, students are placed in an environment not based on finding the differences between them but the similarities. Students are provided with details about the region, the history, and other cultural knowledge; students will bring their own personality to the class, their stories and memories, which will become the core connections to the class materials. The commonalities shared by the students, and even the differences, will spark a more meaningful discussion, one that is, hopefully, more relevant and engaging for students (Johnson and Johnson, Cooperative Leaning: Two Heads 3-4).

Although students will still be competitive, this class set up will create a positive environment, encouraging students to discuss their unique families and knowledge they have gained. Instead of pitting groups against one another, a cooperative learning classroom is designed to be open to groups discovering new information and being willing to share and learn together, not to "get ahead" or be better than other students (Johnson and Johnson, Introduction to Cooperative Learning 2).

Finally, individualistic learning in a cooperative classroom, especially one based on the Appalachian culture, would be useful in allowing students to have their own voice (Johnson and Johnson, Introduction to Cooperative Learning 2-3). Students will be encouraged to write stories and memory logs, contribute to discussions, and discover more about their culture.

In terms of cooperative learning styles, there are three types of successful implementation of this technique: A) Informal learning groups, B) formal cooperative groups, and C) long-term, heterogeneous, peer support groups (Johnson and Johnson, Introduction to Cooperative Learning 2-3).

Informal learning groups are designed to start the class with a discussion, allowing students to take a bit of time to prepare and gather their thoughts about the topics learned in class. Informal learning groups are also successful as after-lecture or lesson discussion groups, especially if students are expected to actively ask questions and lead the discussion of the class (Colorado 2014). In the case of an Appalachian-based cooperative classroom, informal learning groups could involve the teacher asking students to pair up and research uncommon terms found in the Appalachian readings, or for students to find small groups to write discussion questions about the poetry or text. In

these instances, students are gathering together to discuss a task completed in class, giving them a bit of control in what will happen next in the classroom.

Formal cooperative groups, which are implemented and created by the instructor of the classroom (Colorado 2014) are successful when discussion questions are provided for students, a problem is addressed and students are asked to discuss a solution, or to complete a project. In the Appalachian classroom, formal cooperative groups would be extremely successful if students were placed in groups for readings and group-led discussion projects. A solid example of successful implementation of formal groups is expecting students to plan a class period, where student groups are in charge of reading a text, creating discussion questions, and creating learning activities or goals (Colorado 2014). Another example is students in the Appalachian classroom complete a group advocacy project based on concerns in their community. Students would have to work together, design a project of sorts, and present an effective project (Colorado 2014).

For example, Clemson University designed a program where students were asked to become involved in their local communities as active members to complete service projects (Clemson University 2013). Strong Communities was established for students to become more involved, but could easily be modified to become a secondary English research or community service project. Students could find issues within their local community, create a pen-pal or big brothers and big sisters program for younger Appalachian students, or document their family stories in an anthology, all which would be projects completed in a group setting, with multiple students working together to research, compile, write, and make a difference in their hometowns.

The final technique for cooperative learning goals is beginning a long-term, heterogeneous, peer support group. This would be based on the entire class working as one team to complete projects and discussions (Colorado 2014). A writing project designed in 1966 is an example of students working together to complete a class project honoring their local heritage and culture. *Foxfire* is a student-led book series, created by a group of students in north Georgia, and this series has continued to be published since it began in 1966 (Foxfire 2014). A book series or literary magazine about student experiences in Appalachia, a document compiled with stories of their families, memories, heritage, and pride could be the first step in changing and accepting the region. *Foxfire* and other magazines or writing anthologies allow students to enter their local communities, to rediscover the past and even the present, and to use these experiences as a stepping stone for learning and connecting with their heritage (Foxfire 2014). By using Social Emotional Learning goals and producing a safe environment, all students, especially those in the Appalachian classroom, will have a space to share and learn more about one another while also pushing their classmates towards academic achievements.

Cooperative learning is often linked to a rise in critical consciousness about sources of inequality and to help students and teachers become more empowered and motivated to create positive change (Sleeter 161). In the case of Appalachian students, the lack of funding and standardized testing, students often do not get the opportunity to take control of their education by learning more about their cultures and local histories (Sleeter 161). By having students learn about Appalachia, teachers can structure their classrooms so that students learn to cooperate and share stories, but teachers can also demonstrate cooperation through the myriad ways community members (grocery owners,

policemen, other teachers, farmers, etc.) all use cooperation effectively, to prove cooperation is necessary inside the classroom but also extends to the outside world.

Just as *Foxfire* is used for students to write stories about their families and the community, it could also be used as a resource where students could go out and just listen to what others in the community do and have to say (Christal vii). The oral traditions of Appalachia are important; the stories told at family events and even before bed, are instances many Appalachians take pride in. Not only are the stories of elders and other generations important for a project of this sort, but students could also record their own memories and stories, creating and displaying the difference hues and lives in Appalachia. Students could enter their local communities, be mentored by willing family members and other community members, and begin the process of recording these oral traditions with video and recording software, keeping these precious memories and traditions alive in the ever-changing region of Appalachia.

Today's typical classroom is framed by competition and individualistic success, but the new classroom, the classroom of cooperation and empowerment, should be a place where students see their classmates as equals, as sources of help and support, as unique perspectives of a common community, allies, and the "think tank" of power and combined effort (Sleeter 165). In other words, in a successful cooperative classroom, students do not see one another as competition, but resources to learn and discuss the positives, negatives, changes, and stories of the Appalachian region. Each student becomes responsible not only for his or her learning, but for other group members' learning goals as well. In other words, cooperative learning creates positive interdependence and individual accountability, allowing students to work together toward

a group goal while each group member knows the tasks he or she is responsible for the group's task overall project (Sleeter 166).

One of the many positives of implementing cooperative learning into the classroom environment is that collaborative learning fosters social skills, listening, encouraging others, giving constructive feedback, and checking for understanding (Sleeter 166). Cooperative learning can become a powerful model of empowerment because students and teachers are able to redefine their roles in the decision-making process, allowing for students and teachers to work together to create a more autonomous learning environment (Shor 70-71). When students learn together, reviewing relevant and new ideas about how their culture may correlate with topics in the English classroom, students find education to be relatable, engaging, and worth participating in (Shor 71). Educators of a cooperative learning environment enable students to develop a consciousness to identify the competition and inequality they see, to begin to analyze it for what it is, and propose cooperative, fair alternatives to their education and communities.

Cooperative learning is yet another piece to the educational puzzle. If teachers can understand interdependence through the positive aspects of working together, discover how cooperation will work in any unique classroom, and be confident yet flexible, cooperative learning could redefine education towards a more collaborative and less competitive environment for our students' learning and success. Although cooperative learning is constantly changing, it is worth it to implement strategies to create a more enjoyable classroom, where students can reach their academic potential, appreciate

school, be more confident, motivated, and have positive relationships with their classmates, teachers, family, and community.

Teaching Model 3: Empowering Education

Traditional standardized forms of education commonly used in today's academic systems are culturally depriving schools that deny students the opportunity to see their lives reflected in their learning experiences (Miller 15). Educators have a responsibility to teach so that no student feels deprived of his or her culture, no matter what the background (Miller 15). The traditional approach attempts to silence the features of Appalachian culture, forcing students to learn other histories and cultures, while refusing to discuss the culture the students from Appalachia are so familiar with. In an empowered classroom, students and teachers use the community and local culture to set high expectations for learning and the future of the region (Shor 16). Students and their families sometimes buck the educational system, especially the traditional system that often erases Appalachian culture from its lessons, because education leads to loss of the culture and further disorientation of self and identity (Miller 16). As students are given the opportunity to be proud of their culture and heritage, students become more comfortable in sharing personal stories and histories that the entire class can learn and benefit from in the ELA classroom (Kutz and Roskelly 54). The educational system typically plays a role in students' lack of confidence in education, but if students are made to feel assured, they are more likely to acquire both standard and non-standard lessons in the classroom due to the environment being built on respect of the students and their cultures.

In the English Language Arts classroom, students should feel empowered to share and connect to the literature and writings. A practical mode of empowerment directs schools to not only respect cultural diversity, but use it as an advantage for educational approaches (Miller 16). For example, when students are encouraged to write creatively and use their personal dialect as a form of dialogue, students are shown to not be ashamed of who they are (Miller 16). Students are taught to feel pride in their personal identities and use them in their writing (Shor 24).

The notion of empowering students is not traditionally found in the classroom, especially due to the lack of funding, materials for each student, and lack of motivation. With an empowering education and other positive methods of learning, teachers can begin to change education (Egan 274). In other words, by helping students rediscover their own interests and connections, like their Appalachian heritage, we can bring the interest back to learning because students can enter the classroom with knowledge and stories to share, allowing students to have some control and confidence in their learning progress. Too often, the curriculum is designed and controlled by a mainstream culture that erected a solid wall of cultural difference, stereotypes, and pedagogical ignorance (Purcell-Gates 176). By not using the rich cultures of students in each individual and unique classroom, teachers allow themselves to be trapped into a corner when it comes to teaching. They are now teaching to the test and state requirements, when they could use the advantageous cultures of the students to enrich and motivate students towards successful educational progresses. Instead, "Schools should be… inviting to all students. There should be a feeling of respect, trust, and partnership between students, parents, and teachers. In such an environment, students are given the opportunity to express

themselves, and their self-determination will rise, knowing that they can make a difference" (Cowdery 7). By creating a school built on empowerment and more engaged learning, students and teachers help ensure a more positive school experience, opening the door to students finding their voice and becoming active agents in their own successes.

Empowering education is a student-centered, critical pedagogy designed to encourage students in their educational subject matters, making education more relevant for self and social change in the lives of students (Kutz and Roskelly 288). It is a dialogue between teachers and students as they cooperatively investigate everyday themes, social issues, and academic knowledge and barriers. Through dialogue and problem-posing, students become active agents of their learning. In the case of Appalachian students, so often forced to become silenced with educational attainment, empowering education allows these very students to reclaim their culture and begin the process of being knowledgeable citizens with a voice for change (Sleeter 49-50). Students would examine local issues such as environmental dangers or coal mining. With research, presentations, and writing to others in the community and major companies, students would be prepared to discuss the challenges coal companies cause or the dangers of other environmental factors. Through their research, students become educated members of the community who are working on writing formal letters and presentations to share their knowledge with others. Empowering knowledge is a type of learning all students deserve and opens the perspectives of history from the students' point of view and can build a relationship to the students' unique desires, visions, and futures (Sleeter 50). Through an empowering education, students are taught the general curriculum, but the teachers structure the

learning to encompass their personal history, familial memories, and how these parts of the students' lives can relate to the class lessons and other parts of the English classroom environment.

It becomes an important move for teachers to engage students when they bring cultural knowledge into the classroom. Students' cultural knowledge is rooted in their own experiences and reflected in what they believe is real to their families and community (Sleeter 64). School knowledge is quite different because it is concerned with matters and topics removed from the students' experience, and come to the students by the way of adults in verbal form without concrete examples related to the students' experiences. What educators should be advocating for is bridging school knowledge or public knowledge with students' own cultural knowledge, and thus encouraging these students to analyze and use their learning to take charge of changes and histories of their community (Sleeter 66).

A curriculum that is built around the experiences and is student-centered, focusing solely on the learning and merging prior knowledge with new educational growth is the creation of a transformative curriculum, which is designed to empower students. This curriculum helps students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to critically examine the current social structures and the myths and ideologies used to justify it. Paulo Freire states in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "I engage in dialogue because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing" (Freire 17). This dialogue allows students to explore both the positive and negative aspects of the region, to discover all the sides of

the story and truly understand their place in a region. In terms of Appalachia, students will learn about the stereotypes against the region, learning how these may have developed, and begin a conversation on how to speak against these negative thoughts and ideals (Snyder 175). Students could take a specific stereotype such as ignorance.

For the ELA classroom, an instructional fair could be planned with the school where students would present information about the stereotype, why it exists, how this stereotype does not actually exist, and a plan to rewrite and change public perception. Such a curriculum is implemented to teach students critical thinking skills, the ways in which knowledge (positive or negative) is constructed, and how to construct new knowledge through education and their cultures (Sleeter 130). This type of education prepares students with a fuller knowledge about their region, preparing them to face the issues head on, and establishes an understanding of what it means to be an Appalachian, celebrating the values, morals, and ideals of each student. A critical education reflects the region more systematically, without sacrificing rigor or learning requirements and without replacing old myths and stereotypes about Appalachia with new ones (Appalachian Education 19).

The responsibility of any teacher is to make school a positive environment that does not discriminate based on cultural differences but uses these differences as a foundation to build new knowledge and educational growth. The very first step in creating an empowering curriculum for our students is to recruit and train teachers who know, accept, and honor the cultures from which children come (Purcell-Gates 193). Second, all teachers must be proactive members of the community and school. Proactive teachers are in charge of the learning environment, and teachers need to enter the

classroom prepared with knowledge, ideas, and activities to create a successful learning environment (Purcell-Gates 194). Teachers in Appalachia have a vast history that their students bring with them to the classroom, family histories, culture, religion, stories, and so much more. Teachers can use these very things to help students connect with literature, writing, and all other aspects of the English classroom.

Through an empowered classroom, students are given the courage and strength to examine, recognize, and respect the various social factors, stereotypes, and cultural norms influencing their lives, which in turn could lead to an appreciation for their own culture, or even a better understanding to argue against the negative perspectives of Appalachians. For example, teaching through the local culture can provide a basis and emphasis on the student's analysis of regional variation in comparison to other cultures, and to provide the opportunity to compare and contrast it with different cultures. Students and teachers could create a public forum where students and members of the community all come together to write. It could be set up as a workshop for people to talk about topics, write together, and share their own stories. A writing workshop would be a great opportunity for students to see how their generation of Appalachia is drastically different from others in the community while also giving them a chance to see how their culture has remained stable.

Through such an emphasis, the student gains some sense of the ways in which he or she shares certain experiences, problems, and challenges with other peoples, as well as in what ways he or she differs (Appalachian Education 20-21). This empowering teaching method does not deprive students of their culture by denying the local culture's existence; this approach acknowledges the culture in the student's possession and

proceeds from there. Students in Appalachia may leave the region with little knowledge about how outsiders perceive them, and empowering their educational pursuits to better understand outside worldviews prepares students to understand their region, the stereotypes, and become strong in how they feel (Snyder 176). Ultimately, an empowering education helps students form their own opinions, not allowing others to silence them or their culture if they ever leave the region.

Advantages to teaching an empowerment-based curriculum (Miller 18)

1. The students are viewed as active members of their home, building of a greater sense of community, especially in the school environment.
2. Teaching lessons based on the culture of Appalachia, students see the positive attributes of our culture, especially since most Appalachians do not like being associated with the derogatory stereotypes of being Appalachian. This type of education can lead students to form organizational skills and an understanding that creates a positive view of Appalachians.
3. Reducing social conflict by educating students on differences and issues within a region or culture, taking time to also view the past culture and the more modern world and how these two are similar and can work together.

Goals of this educational reform (Miller 19)

1. Education that does not alienate or uproot, but leaves students aware of their backgrounds, stereotypes, artists, writers, etc. Causes students to not feel shame but pride for Appalachia.

2. Creating the motives for such an education by illustrating how students are more engaged when they have a personal connection to the lessons and units taught in school.
3. Influence positively secondary schools and student motivation because students are learning lessons relevant and can witness any changes produced or worked towards by the students.
4. Self-realization of students and institution due to students, teachers, and community working collaboratively to better understand the culture of Appalachia.

An effective transformative or empowering curriculum must be implemented by teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help students to understand the ways in which knowledge is constructed and methods of engagement that encourage students to participate and feel comfortable discussing their culture. Teachers should also come to grips with their own personal values and cultural identities in order for them to help students understand the diversity of their given culture (Sleeter 139). Ultimately, the teacher's goal is to create a cooperative learning environment by involving students in deciding course content, and inspiring students to become an active participant in their learning. This learning emphasizes the notion of identification, discovery of the self within each student (Laubscher 217). Educators must come prepared to every class meeting with skill and comfort in order to negotiate and facilitate an empowered, cooperative, critical classroom. It demands a willingness to be vulnerable and to face uncertainties of student responses and learning outcomes.

Teaching Model 4: Place-Based Education

One of the most advantageous teaching methods in a rich cultured and environmentally beautiful location like Appalachia is an initiative known as place-based education. Place-based education is teaching through the local community and using the environment as a tool to teach concepts in English Language Arts and other subject areas across the curriculum (Smith, Learning to be Where We Are 587). With a major emphasis on hands-on, real-world, relevant learning experiences, place-based education increases academic accomplishments, helps students develop a stronger respect for their local community, encourages students to appreciate the natural world, and creates the potential for students to serve as active, contributing citizens of Appalachia (Sobel 11). The school becomes a place where Appalachian students can become more engaged with their communities because students will be learning about their local heritage and histories, roles of community members, and the value of Appalachia. Instead of hiding their Appalachian identity, students will find a passion and love for their home by using their culture as a teaching tool for tolerance and acceptance.

The goal of place-based education is to emphasize pride in the local heritage of students because this teaching method communicates lessons about the natural environment and culture of a place (Sobel 11). Place-based education explores the history, folk culture, social problems, economics, and aesthetics of the community and its environment (Sobel 13). Through this appreciation, teachers would be preparing their students to have a broader knowledge of Appalachia by exploring the myths, the beautiful culture, and geographical information of the region. By providing students with a place-based, respectful education, teachers are encouraging their students to better understand themselves and who they are in their culture.

Instead of being constricted by standardized curriculum guidelines, teachers of place-based education practices allow individualization of learning to occur. David Sobel states, "By adapting their curriculum to the local conditions, they allowed completely different and unique learning…to evolve" (Sobel 17). An example of such learning has been done in magazines such as *Foxfire*, where the stories of the community are written and published in a school's literary magazine (Foxfire 2014). Other instances of such learning are evident in advocacy projects, which students would devise a plan to help solve local issues within their community. These projects include: writing to social groups, talking with locals about how any given issue affects them or their business, and problem-solving towards a positive solution. This can be an amazing educational advantage. Place-based education, involving students, teachers, community members, and family bonds, moves away from the idea of people sending kids to school and trusting local educators to completely shape the minds of their students. Sobel explains that if place-based education involves everyone in the students' lives, everyone has a hand in education (Sobel 72). This fact leads to a stronger support for education in the local schools because everyone involved plays an important role in educating the community's youth.

This is not to say that place-based education does not have issues to work out, or to even say this method would be successful in all schools. With a major educational change, such as place-based education, there will likely be misconceptions and negativity surrounding the proposal. David Sobel and Gregory Smith, in *Place- and Community-Based Education in Schools,* discuss the common misconceptions people form against using place-based education in public schools. These two also re-conceptualize how

education could positively be changed by using the community and culture as a stepping-stone to learning.

The first misconception surrounding place- and community-based education sounds appealing but it's too difficult to fit into the required curriculum (Smith & Sobel ix). In today's school system, it is crucial to meet state and federal requirements, or else the school could lose its funding and accreditation standards. Secondly, place-based education is often thought to be another add-on for teachers, creating a much more complex and difficult curriculum to educate students (Smith & Sobel ix). Smith and Sobel send a warning in the third misconception discussed, explaining how many believe place-based education is an educational approach that focuses on environmental education (Smith & Sobel ix). In this case, many parents and community members believe teachers using place-based education techniques are attempting to brainwash students into following an environmental agenda. Many place-based educational programs fail or are tabled in faculty meetings because of the belief that these programs are only for rural schools in small communities with lots of wide-open spaces (Smith & Sobel ix). Many educators and community members do not realize that place-based education is meant to mean any "place" that encourages and influences the students of an area or region. And finally, the most telling concern of place-based education is educators who believe it takes more time and energy, both of which are in short supply for most teachers (Smith & Sobel ix). Yes, place-based education is a vastly different teaching strategy, but how can educators not try a teaching method that reshapes education in positive ways, just because they fear it will take too much time and energy?

In these moments when education seems to buck a new idea, perhaps this is when we should reconsider what advantages new teaching techniques may offer. Place-based education is proven to help motivate students to learn and has contributed to higher test scores on state-mandated tests (Smith & Sobel ix). Gregory Smith discusses the success of place-based education experiences:

> Students learned to collect and analyze data, to collaborate with one another and other community members, to organize public events, and to write and deliver testimony at hearings. They came to perceive themselves as citizens capable of participating in public conversations that could protect and improve their own lives and the lives of those around them. They and others began to recognize their voices as significant and as potentially powerful as the voices of any other participants in civic government (Smith, Breaking Through 194).

Place-based education is a new way of thinking about the school's role in a local community, and everyone involved needs to see this program as a holistic mindset towards school reform. Place-based education is about local places and the environment, but it's not limited to those things. The programs discussed in place-based learning can also be about history, art, cultural diversity, local history, social justice, and more (Smith & Sobel x). Place- and community-based education involves using all of the environments in which students live as starting points to teach concepts in English Language Arts (Smith & Sobel x). This learning style is not limited to rural schools, as it is alive and improving student engagement in urban and rural, liberal and conservative, public and private, schools across the nation. In effective place-based educational settings, teachers and students work together to discover issues and concerns, which

allows students to take responsibility for their own learning and become active members of the community. In these classrooms, you do not see students piled into desks, listening to the teachers continue a lecture. Instead, you see students outside, sitting on benches writing poetry about the nature around them, students speaking to their elders who come to the school to share ideas and stories, and eighth grade students teaching a local history lesson or skill to younger students (Smith & Sobel x). Teachers are no longer required to prepare all of the content students will learn; they instead assemble materials, resources, and inside- and outside-of-classroom experiences for student learning (Smith & Sobel x). Students are in charge of working with issues important to them, connecting with material familiar and meaningful for their personal lives and learning.

An extension of this would be an advocacy project. Students will decide on the issues in their local communities they wish to explore, while teachers play the role of a mediator, advisor, and contact to help spread the message of the students. An educator would agree that place-based education will take time and patience to implement, but studies prove more students become involved in school, and their achievements demonstrate the attention and commitment they bring to their studies, which is enough to prove the worth of this educational program. Sobel and Smith even spoke with teachers who "rediscover the possibilities and ideals that drew them into education as a vocation and become energized and passionate about their work with the young" (Smith and Sobel xi). It begins with the students and teachers, but place-based education may just create a school environment better than anyone has ever imagined, creating a system of learning that allows students and the community to come together to learn.

In terms of why place-based education would be a positive method of educational change, place-based education draws on two critical aspects of educational reform. The first is the applicability of place-based education to all disciplines. Any subject or content area can be taught and covered with a place-based educational system in place. Place-based education is not limited to the English Language Arts classroom. Students could collect water samples from local creeks and ponds, studying scientific data provided by the rich region (Sobel x). Students of the math and science disciplines can study area and other measurements as they plan the school garden, with the science classes exploring the different plants. Secondly, place-based education involves the community in the educational process (Smith & Sobel 23). The teacher is not the only educator in a place-based education class. Local produce markets can become members of the educational team, illustrating the different plants and produce of the region, money collection techniques, and stories from their business and families. Family members are also rich resources for a place-based initiative because students can reconnect and rediscover the history of their family and explore their individual histories. Education becomes a vehicle for change in the community, beginning with the students and trickling through to family members, community members, and educators (Smith & Sobel 42).

David Sobel explains, a recent study of 40 schools across the nation indicated place-based education practices resulted in wide-ranging, positive effects on student learning (Smith & Sobel 23). The study uncovered that place-based learning improves student achievement and motivation in all content areas (Sobel 36). One parent of a place-based classroom states, "[Our daughter] feels like she's in a special place [where] there's a real sense of 'we have a mission, we have a purpose, we enjoy ourselves. And

what we do really means something, not just to ourselves, but to the world around us. There's huge pride [in the students] and in parents as well" (Benefits of Place-based Education). In other words, students see their education as more than just school, they truly believe they are making a difference. Students, teachers, and administrators also reported other positive developments of problem-solving, increased critical thinking and decision-making skills; enthusiasm and engagement in learning; and, a rise in educational achievement (standardized test scores and grade point average) (Benefits of Place-based Education).

Students' achievement and grades improved due to attendance becoming better and negative behaviors reduced. Obviously if students are more motivated, engaged, and committed to learning, they are more likely to attend school and enjoy the lessons explored in the classroom (Sobel 37-38). Students who learn their cultural history have a connection with the local community and participate in learning that is not stagnant but exciting and relatable. It is also not surprising that test scores will increase when students are being taught relevant and interesting materials, relatable to their own lives. In The State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER) study, seventeen comparisons of reading test scores indicated that students in place-based education programs outperformed their peers in traditional programs (Sobel 38). Students read with improved understanding, and these students connected and synthesized complex ideas more effectively through higher quality work (Sobel 39). Students who are given choices in lessons they want to explore, like students' choice in selecting novels to read or issues to research and discuss, are more likely to be engaged and contributing members of any classroom environment. Not to mention, when students are learning lessons, such as how

to maintain the school garden or record a story from their grandparents, they see how relative their learning is. Students see their progress and connect with their learning in ways deeper than a grade on a progress report. They see the growth and changes they can make in their school and community (Sobel 39). Perhaps most importantly, students learning through place-based education programs tend to speak with increased skills and confidence about topics in all content areas of school and community learning.

As a future educator, place-based education appeals to me because it provides an understanding of "grounded" or "rooted" learners *within* the world, allowing students to become active members of their educational progress and success, not being limited or silenced by stereotypes or mainstream culture. Instead, place-based programs are designed to educate students about their local environments through respectful teaching, and has an embedded quality that pushes the students to respect and discover the positives of their community, researching aspects of its history, learning about their culture, and trying to change the mainstream ideals (Sobel 17-18). This is especially important if students plan to leave Appalachia, preparing them to handle the negativity and stereotypes with grace and respect, and giving them a voice to never feel discouraged because they are different. Instead, place-based education provides students with a solid foundation of their culture, which may just be the driving force to changing the myths of the region in outside academic environments and mainstream cultures.

Place-based education encourages students to travel outside of the region to learn the value of other places and cultures. It also helps students to become "student resources to the community," taking their understanding of the region to become productive assets to the health and changes for the community. A pedagogy of place re-contextualizes

education locally for the community, families, and students (Sobel 18). Many Appalachian students wish to remain in the region, so place-based education is relevant because it makes education a preparation for citizenship, both locally and in the regions outside of Appalachia (Sobel 18). Place-based education encourages a wide variety of learning, but mostly preparing students to understand their own identities through the region and place where their lives began and the influences shaping their personal and academic growth.

With a curriculum grounded in local issues and possibilities, be they stories from people's past, or literature focused on the region, place-based education demonstrates a willingness of teachers to step beyond the traditional lessons presented in generic texts and workbooks, to design instructional plans to reinvigorate and positively change education of our students (Smith & Sobel 57). When teachers invite students to share their own knowledge and to exercise their own voices, teachers provide the stepping-stones for students to make a difference and learn more through their community. Through partnerships with local agencies, stores, and community members, young people are provided with access to adults outside the school to learn new and engaging lessons from, which can also supplement the learning completed in class (Smith & Sobel 58).

The findings about place-based education are clear. This education reform fosters students' connection to place and creates vibrant collaboration between schools and communities (Benefits of Place-based Education). It boosts student achievement by drawing on the experiences and issues shared by the students, their families, and the community in which they call home (Benefits of Place-based Education). All of the research suggests that place-based educational approaches hold a promise of enhancing

student engagement and success, giving students a sense of responsibility for changing the world around them through their educational growth. Place-based education may just bridge the differences between home and school, positioning their learning in such a way that students feel their and their families' experiences are legitimatized and worthy of respect, ultimately creating a meaningful context to discover new information, share their own histories, and merge their personal lives with school.

Chapter V: Conclusion: Over Yonder is the Hope for Alternative Learning

My grandmother's photograph told me about more than just a rough time in my grandmother's childhood. That photograph showed me that education is not an easy road to travel. Just as my grandmother's life was often difficult, education will have its moments of struggles and arguments about testing, changes to the curriculum, and many other things. My grandmother's photo was also a testament to how she prevailed through those struggles. Education is a precipice. It is continually changing and being redefined by new teachers, teaching methods, and the stories each student brings into the classroom. As educators, we must honor those stories.

Education is not defined by desks in the classroom and test scores. Education is designed to be a place of discovery, a place where students are free to bring their own rich histories into the classroom, and the mutual respect for learning alongside one another and in the community of Appalachia. Education is about our students, their histories, and their stories.

While Appalachia is advancing and is comparable with the nation as a whole on many educational indicators, the region still lags in secondary schools encouraging students' motivation in their educational progresses (Development and Progress). The percentage of the population in the Appalachian region with a high school diploma or equivalent degree is 80.9 percent compared with 88 percent nationwide (Development and Progress). While Appalachian education has made great strides in students receiving high school diplomas, educators still have a job to do, the responsibility to motivate, encourage, and support students to enjoy and relate to the education they are given.

The importance of modifying teaching in Appalachia, or opening new doors for students, is the importance of teaching about the region, but also about sharing the truth

and challenging students to think critically about the issues, stereotypes, and beauty, whether in Appalachia or any other culture (*Appalachia in the Classroom* xvi). By using the culture of students within the classroom environment, those same students are given a voice to share their stories, and the integration of the Appalachian culture into the Appalachian classroom, encourages students to reveal the stories passed down in their families or that shaped their lives (Tate 98). Linda Tate continues the importance of using culture as a foundation for learning as she writes, "As a classroom community; our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing one another's presence" (Tate 98). Students become motivated learners when their education provides them with choice, a voice, and empowers them to discover who they are.

It truly is the responsibility of the teacher to continually strive to be better, to make students' experience with learning so powerful that students and parents won't tolerate boring textbooks and sitting silently in desks (Sobel 33). As parents, consider how learning could be rejuvenated through real-world projects and using the culture of students to build on relatable and positive self-identity. As administrators, encourage teachers to create partnerships and take risks to motivate and empower students to become active citizens and learners. As students, take control of your educational goals and demand an increased rigor of knowledge through an educational system that focuses on learning relevant to your life and community (Sobel 33). Through empowering, cooperative, place-based, non-traditional, and Social Emotional Learning plans, these could be the first steps in creating a more positive, relatable, and culturally respectful learning environment that all students deserve.

In my high school, located in central Appalachia, teachers typically teach to the test. One teacher attempted to teach something different and the superintendent walked through the classroom doors, with students silently reading a non-approved text, and began pulling books from the hands of the students and tossing them in a box. The teacher in the classroom had been teaching for nearly thirty-five years, and she was taking control of her classroom, teaching something different than the required materials, and she was ultimately punished for this decision. She later retired based on the strict rules and control over her ability to teach.

Although this could very easily happen anywhere, these are the exact moments I hope to prevent, but I also desire to teach controversial materials and encourage students to see how education can relate to their modern lives. For example, in my freshman composition classroom, I created the personal experience unit, at the beginning of the semester, to be focused on teaching a text of a controversial nature, Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Although this text is not based on an Appalachian or a setting in the mountains, this text does break the mold of the traditional classroom literature requirements. The book faces suicide, bullying, and other painful realizations of high school head on, forcing students to make connections to the characters and reconsider their actions in the future. What happens if you substitute *The Thirteen Reasons Why* with an Appalachian text, poems by Jim Minick, *Appalachian Values* by Loyal Jones, or a novel by Ron Rash? How could the environment of a classroom change if students were led to better understand their own cultures, morals, and values? My goal is not a liberal agenda, or even an attempt to share conservative views. Instead, my goal is for students

to learn more about themselves in the process of discovering the greatness that comes from their culture.

If educators are meant to design and use effective pedagogical practices that help students come to critical consciousness, it is imperative and crucial that they study the barriers to critical thought that may impede educational progress. An educator cannot assist students in becoming critical thinkers without first recognizing the factors that serve as barriers to critical thinking (Snyder 62). Through culturally sensitive, culturally knowledgeable lenses in place, teachers, administrators, and policy makers will be much more likely to assume responsibility for the educational progress of all children. Thus when they seek to understand learners, they must seek to understand the individual and the cultural contexts within which each student's unique qualities have developed. Teachers are the mediators; they are the people who can bridge the gap between the pressure at home and the students' own distrust of education. Teachers are the very people that hold the key to using students' backgrounds and histories to delve deeper into a less standardized learning system and provide students with personal growth, encouragement, relative and relatable knowledge, and a foundation and thirst for the importance of education in today's modern world.

Teaching Appalachian culture and literature is not necessarily going to change the entire face of education, but I firmly believe it is a start. By taking on community problems and learning more about the positive attributes of any region by rooting place-based lessons in the unique literature, history (general and family histories), and other aspects, students, teachers, administrators, families, and everyone touched, can rediscover their sense of place. Of course, standards of learning and other school requirements will

have to be followed, but learning based on hands-on projects, related to the students (inside and out of the classroom) could reinvigorate the learning experiences so often dreaded by newer generations of secondary students. By opening the door to immersion in their own cultures, students could become more engaged in their academic achievement because the lessons would, for the first time, relate on a personal level to their own lives, but students would also have the necessary education and research in their educational toolboxes to make tangible contributions to resolve local issues, or even to begin to change the preconceived stereotypes of their region. Education is meant to constantly be in search of new ways to connect students, to gain a new respect for themselves or their place, and to begin to see themselves as more than the stereotypes polluting the media. This learning experience allows students to see themselves as a part of a long, withstanding, and continuing history, which in turn, may just allow them to be hopeful and positive stewards of their home and education.

Now we return to my story from the beginning. By showing me that photograph so many years ago, my granny was not pushing me to leave Appalachia in search of a better life. Instead, her goal was to give me a thirst to better understand where I came from. When I grew up, I knew I would become a teacher. I come from a family of teachers. My mother is an actual trained teacher's assistant for special needs students, but she taught me much more than how to be a decent educator. She taught me how to stand strong, to always take your job home with you because kids need you to care all the time, not just inside the four walls of a school, and ultimately, she taught me how to be the human being that I am still becoming. My father taught me a slew (in Appalachia, we use "slew" for "a ton" or "lots") of skills. He taught me how to hunt and fish, to lay

brick, how to change a tire on the car, and to stand up with a "spine like a saw log" to anyone that may be against me. Finally, I had a grandmother who shared more than just a few simple lessons with me. Her entire life was dedicated to the stories of the past; she was the recorder of memories. My grandmother was a storyteller, master chef, and the woman who taught me that the rim of a glass can cut the prettiest biscuits your eyes ever did see. I come from a family of educators…even if it's not through the traditional methods of brick and mortar schooling, I grew up understanding the marginalized culture that I, myself, am a proud member of, and through my life full of lessons, I can educate others with the voice and spirit of Appalachia.

Appalachia is not easily defined, but perhaps it is even more difficult to distinguish what being an Appalachian educator is. Appalachia is "unforgettable music, woodwork, quilts, mountains, beautiful rivers, waterfalls, abundant animal life, coal mining, logging, and people who are self-reliant, independent, family and faith centered, hardworking, genuine, honest, resourceful, colorful, and intelligent" (McCauley-Jewel 2015). As a teacher, living and teaching in the region, Theresa Burriss says it best, "to be Appalachian is empowering" (Burriss 2015). In my opinion, Appalachia and education go hand-in-hand. The culture lives inside each student in the region's classrooms, and the region's students can rediscover and grow as they share their voice and experience the splendor of a positive, accepting, and promising education.

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Appendix

Teaching Short Stories with Appalachian Short Stories
Teaching Matrix (Appalachian Awareness/Empowerment)

Overarching Goal	Student Learning Goals	Teaching Methods	Assessment/Technology
• Introduction of the Elements of a Short Story	• Students will gain knowledge of the elements of a short story • Students will participate in a discussion of these elements and provided with a handout of terms • Students will then be asked to discuss these aspects in their favorite stories, or in a selected fairy tale, aloud	• PowerPoint introducing the elements of a short story • Large group discussion of the elements discussed, review of materials • Students will then work individually, or in groups, to discuss the terms discussed and apply their new knowledge to their favorite stories.	• PowerPoint on the Elements of a Short Story • Vocabulary Handout of Short Story terms
• Introduction to Appalachia	• Students will be informed about Appalachia (things they already know about Appalachia, stereotypes, media, etc.)	• Discussion of Appalachia • Review of the elements of a short story	• SmartBoard: running tab of thoughts, questions, facts, etc. • Also, encourage other research endeavors for students to learn more about the

			region
• Introduction to WordPress blog creation	• Students will be provided with visual instructions on how the class will create their WordPress pages	• Students view the creation of WordPress pages. • Teacher will create one profile with a class username and password • All student blogs will be under one profile, the class profile, and all blogs will be private, only accessible by the teacher and student • Students will create their blogs, the pages required for this unit on those blogs, and settings will be set as private.	• WordPress blog creation and instructions • Discussion of the unit, assignments, and other items to be completed in the short story unit (all short story pieces, final short story drafts, and any academic writing will be submitted to the blog)
• Discussion of character • Short story example one	• Students will read "All the Years of Her Life" • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Students will read "All the Years of Her Life" • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph	• Discussion of character • Short story example one

		summary style activity and discussion questions for students	
• Discussion of character • Appalachian Short story example one	• Students will read "The Fight: Toni and Candy" by Crystal Wilkinson (Water Street) • Students will discuss the story and character development	• Students will read "The Fight: Toni and Candy" • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	• Presentation on "The Fight: Toni and Candy" or discussion questions for this story • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian" • Discussion of themes or stereotypes (even media or social issues in the stories)
• Discussion of the differences between the characters in the two stories read in class	• Students will determine the elements of a short story based off the two stories read and discussed • Discussion questions will be provided to engage students • Students will also post discussion questions to their personal Wordpress	• Teacher will use the Wordpress sites to pull student discussion questions from the students • Teacher will also provide discussion questions about the two stories • Elements of the stories will be discussed and analyzed by the students	• Wordpress will be used to create blogs about character development (questions for prompts will be discussed in class) • SmartBoard if discussion is to be recorded or if notes are to be taken (can be saved as a file and printed or emailed to students)

	pages that the teacher can pull ideas from for class discussion		
• Development of Character	• Students will begin writing their own short story collections by creating a character-centered story • Students will be writing an anthology of creative works	• The focus of this week is character development in short fiction • Students will be provided with activities to develop characters (students are encouraged to write about concrete and abstract details about their characters (this will be discussed in class), students will write dialogue, and students will write detailed descriptions of their characters' profiles for Story 1	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the character profile • All character profiles will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed
• Completion of Story 1	• Students will compose their first short story	• Students will use their character stories from the previous day to write a character-centered story • Students are encouraged to write in	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the short stories • All stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when

		similar styles that were read in class if they do not know how to structure their essays • This will be the first piece in their story anthologies to be completed by the end of the unit.	completed (Due by the end of the unit)
• Discussion of setting • Short story two	• Students will read "A Mother" • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Students will read "A Mother" • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	• Presentation on "A Mother"
• Discussion of setting • Appalachian Short story example two	• Students will read Lou Crabtree's "Homer Snake" • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Students will read "Homer Snake" • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity	• Presentation on "Homer-Snake"

		and discussion questions for students	
• Discussion of the differences between the settings and how they are created in the two stories read in class	• Students will determine the elements of a short story based off the two stories read and discussed • Discussion questions will be provided to engage students • Students will also post discussion questions to Wordpress pages that the teacher can pull ideas from for class discussion	• Teacher will use the Wordpress site to pull student discussion questions from the students • Teacher will also provide discussion questions about the two stories • Elements of the stories will be discussed and analyzed by the students	• Wordpress will be used to create blogs about character development (questions for prompts will be discussed in class) • SmartBoard if discussion is to be recorded or if notes are to be taken (can be saved as a file and printed or emailed to students)
• Development of Setting	• Students will begin writing their own short story collections by creating a setting-centered story • Students will be writing an anthology of creative works	• The focus of this week is setting development in short fiction • Students will be provided with activities to develop their settings for their stories The following questions may help to develop a setting: • Where is it?	• Microsoft Word if needed to type their detailed setting • All setting profiles will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed

		• When is it? • What is the weather like? • What are the social conditions? • What is the landscape or environment like? • What special details make the setting vivid?	
• Completion of Story 2	• Students will compose their second short story	• Students will use their setting descriptions from the previous day to write a story with a detailed setting for the characters or events • Students are encouraged to write in similar styles that were read in class if they do not know how to structure their essays • This will be the second piece in their story anthologies to be completed by the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the short stories • All stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed (Due by the end of the unit)
• Discussion of plot	• Students will read "The Tell Tale	• Students will read "The Tell Tale Heart"	• Presentation on "The Tell Tale Heart"

• Short story example three	Heart” • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	
• Discussion of plot • Appalachian story three	• Students will read “Trilobites” by Breece D’J Pancake • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Students will read “Trilobites” • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	• Presentation on “Trilobites”
• Discussion of the differences between the plots and how they are created in the two stories read in class	• Students will determine the elements of a short story based off the two stories read and discussed • Discussion questions will be provided to engage students	• Teacher will use the Wordpress site to pull student discussion questions from the students • Teacher will also provide discussion questions about the two stories • Elements of the stories	• Wordpress will be used to create blogs about character development (questions for prompts will be discussed in class) • SmartBoard if discussion is to be recorded or if notes

	• Students will also post discussion questions to Wordpress sites that the teacher can pull ideas from for class discussion	will be discussed and analyzed by the students	are to be taken (can be saved as a file and printed or emailed to students)
• Development of plot	• Students will begin writing their own short story collections by creating a plot-centered story • Students will be writing an anthology of creative works	• The focus of this week is plot development in short fiction • Students will be provided with activities to develop their plot for their stories The following questions may help to develop a plot: • What kind of story do I want to tell? • What conflict, struggle, or events will take place in the story? • Will characters succeed in achieving the Story Goal? • Will my main character be someone who changes or sticks to his guns? • If my main character	• Microsoft Word if needed to type their plot brainstorms for their third essay • All plot profiles will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed

		changes, how will he/she change? • Will the outcome be good or bad for my main character?	
• Completion of Story 3	• Students will compose their third short story	• Students will use their plot descriptions from the previous day to write a story with a detailed plot outline for the characters or events • Students are encouraged to write in similar styles that were read in class if they do not know how to structure their essays • This will be the third piece in their story anthologies to be completed by the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the short stories • All stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed (Due by the end of the unit)
• Discussion of point of view • Short story example four	• Students will read "The Yellow Wall-Paper" • Students will be provided and discuss the story	• Students will read "The Yellow Wall-Paper" • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This	• Presentation on "The Yellow Wall-Paper"

	paragraph by paragraph	presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	
• Discussion of point of view • Appalachian story four	• Students will read the final chapter of Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer* (chapter told in the perspective of a coyote) • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Students will read final chapter of *Prodigal Summer* • Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students • Students will also be provided with a plot summary of the novel before beginning this final chapter.	
• Discussion of the differences between the point of views and how they are created in the two stories read	• Students will determine the elements of a short story based off the two stories read and discussed • Discussion	• Teacher will use the Wordpress site to pull student discussion questions from the students • Teacher will also provide discussion	• Wordpress will be used to create blogs about character development (questions for prompts will be discussed in class)

in class	questions will be provided to engage students • Students will also post discussion questions to Wordpress that the teacher can pull ideas from for class discussion	questions about the two stories • Elements of the stories will be discussed and analyzed by the students	• SmartBoard if discussion is to be recorded or if notes are to be taken (can be saved as a file and printed or emailed to students)
• Development of point of view	• Students will begin writing their own short story collections by creating a story with a specific point of view • Students will be writing an anthology of creative works	• The focus of this week is plot development in short fiction • Students will be provided with activities to develop the point of view for their stories. They will create an outline of their stories and the point of view most appropriate. They will tell the story aloud to group members before they begin writing the draft to figure out what is the most effective way to tell their story ideas The following questions may help to develop	• Microsoft Word if needed to type their point of view group brainstorm and outlines for their fourth essay • All point of view stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed

		the point of view: • Who is speaking? • Is this speaker believable? • Does the point of view effect the story? • Why did you choose the narrator that you did?	
• Completion of Story 4	• Students will compose their fourth short story	• Students will use their point of view descriptions and outlines from the previous day to write a story • Students are encouraged to write in similar styles that were read in class if they do not know how to structure their essays • This will be the fourth piece in their story anthologies to be completed by the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the short stories • All stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed (Due by the end of the unit)
• Discussion of theme • Short story	• Students will read "The Curious Case of Benjamin	• Students will read "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"	• Presentation on "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"

example five	Button” • Students will be provided and discuss the story paragraph by paragraph	• Teacher will provide a presentation outlining the entire story. This presentation will include the paragraph-by-paragraph summary style activity and discussion questions for students	
• Discussion of theme • Appalachian story five	• Students will read *Her Secret Song* by Jim Minick (although this collection is poetry, the themes students can pull are endless) •	• Students will read *Her Secret Song*	• Discussion questions for Minick’s collection.
• Discussion of the differences between the themes and how they are created in the two stories read in class	• Students will determine the elements of a short story based off the two stories read and discussed • Discussion questions will be provided to engage students • Students will also post discussion questions to	• Teacher will use the Wordpress site to pull student discussion questions from the students • Teacher will also provide discussion questions about the two stories • Elements of the stories will be discussed and analyzed by the students	• Wordpress will be used to create blogs about character development (questions for prompts will be discussed in class) • SmartBoard if discussion is to be recorded or if notes are to be taken (can be saved as a file and printed or

	Wordpress that the teacher can pull ideas from for class discussion		emailed to students)
• Development of theme	• Students will begin writing their own short story collections by creating a story with a theme • Students will be writing an anthology of creative works • Students will be given a series of events, people, places, things, etc. A large group discussion of different themes that could be used will be discussed. • Students will practice creating a theme by writing practice stories with their group for the events given by the teacher.	• The focus of this week is theme in short fiction • Students will be provided with activities to develop the theme for their stories. They can choose a theme common to literature, or they can make up their own. They will choose their theme. The following questions may help to develop the point of view: • What is the overarching meaning or lesson to be learned? • Why is this theme important for readers, the author, story characters, etc.? • How does this theme	• Microsoft Word if needed to type their group activities • All theme-based stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed

		relate to the overall story? • Students will work together in groups to practice writing themes based on topics provided by the teacher. • Students will them decide on a theme that will work with their anthology.	
• Completion of Story 5	• Students will compose their fifth short story	• Students will use their theme-based activities and outlines from the previous day to write a story • Students are encouraged to write in similar styles that were read in class if they do not know how to structure their essays • This will be the fifth piece in their story anthologies to be completed by the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the short stories • All stories will be posted to the students' WordPress pages when completed (Due by the end of the unit)
• Combination of	• Students will be	• The teacher will	• Microsoft Word for

all the elements of a short story • Students will write complete short stories, including the five major elements of a short story. • Students are also encouraged to add other elements of a short story discussed	completing a writing workshop with their classmates and writing groups. • Students will be using the knowledge they have learned about short story writing to write a complete story (6-8 typed pages) • Students can continue any pieces they have already written for their anthology of stories • Students will revise their stories previously written if needed	encourage students to choose any theme • Assignment sheet for the final essay requirements will be provided • Once students decide on a theme, they will be given time to complete a draft of a story, including all the elements of a short story. • Drafts will be reviewed once they are completed.	drafting. • WordPress to submit completed rough drafts to a page on the students' blogs.
• Peer reviewing of drafts for editing and revision	• Students will begin the process of editing and revising their essays.	• Teacher will discuss revision and editing for students • Show an example of a revised essay • Students will them peer review their writing group's essays • They will send the	• Microsoft Word for peer editing drafts. • All drafts will need to be attached to the WordPress pages. The student will post all their feedback from their classmates to their

		documents to one another as Word documents. Using Word comments, students will leave feedback on the elements of the story, ways to revise, and editing marks on the essay. • Students will also be able to meet with the instructor for mini-conferences with any questions	WordPress page.
• Students will complete their final drafts of their short stories and other short stories previously written during this unit.	• Students will use the revision and editing feedback to complete essays • Post-test of elements of a short story to assess knowledge	• Teacher will provide a checklist of what is required for this unit • Students will work individually to complete drafts. • Questions to consider: • Does the scene establish the date and setting? • How does it develop the character's emotional makeup? • Is the scene driven by a specific character	• All finalized pieces will be posted to the WordPress page for review and grading. • GoogleDocs Post-test to see the growth through the unit. Students will be provided with a link or directions to access the test.

		goal? • What dramatic action is shown? • How much conflict, tension, suspense, or curiosity is shown? • Does the character show emotional changes and reactions within the scene? • Does the scene reveal thematic significance to the overall story? • Post-test to assess growth	

Note: Appalachian short stories will be used as a basis for this unit, but this unit will also focus on other literature to stimulate discussion and differences of Appalachia (area, writing style, characters, author's writing choices, etc.)

Teaching Poetry with Appalachian Poets

Overarching Goal	Student Learning Goals	Teaching Methods	Assessment/Technology
• Introduction to Poetry Unit	• Students will gain knowledge about different types of poetry • Students will participate in a discussion of poems they know and love, types of poetry they	• PowerPoint introducing the different types of poetry this unit will focus on. May also include a brief definition of all the different types of poetry, especially	• PowerPoint on the different poetry types we will be completing • Vocabulary Handout of poetry terms

	may be familiar with, etc. • Students will then be asked to discuss poetry in their assigned writing and reading groups	those required for SOL standards. • Large group discussion of the poetry types discussed, review of materials • Students will then work individually, or in groups, to discuss the terms discussed and begin researching some sample poems from Appalachian writers.	
• Introduction to Appalachia	• Students will be informed about Appalachia (things they already know about Appalachia, stereotypes, media, etc.)	• Discussion of Appalachia • Review poetry terms	• SmartBoard: running tab of thoughts, questions, facts, etc. • Also, encourage other research endeavors for students to learn more about the region
• Introduction to an Elegy	• Students will be provided with a definition of an elegy. • Writing groups will research this type of poetry. • Student groups will	• Teacher will provide students with information about elegy poetry. • Teacher will walk around to each group and discuss the poetry type and help to	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.

	find an example of any type of elegy to read aloud to the class.	research information and examples.	
• Review of elegy poetry form • Begin reading *Her Secret Song* by Jim Minick	• Students will read *Her Secret Song* • Students in the class will read this poetry in a popcorn fashion, all students taking turns reading aloud.	• Students will read *Her Secret Song* • Teacher will provide discussion questions and prompts for discussion and freewriting activities	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading.
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Her Secret Song*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will continue reading in a popcorn fashion • Teacher will provide discussion questions and prompts for discussion and freewriting activities	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day	• Students will continue reading in a popcorn fashion • Teacher will provide	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on

• Continue reading *Her Secret Song*	• Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	discussion questions and prompts for discussion and freewriting activities	personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of how *Her Secret Song* was written in memory and honor of two sisters. • Discussion of how these poems could be considered elegy poems • Discussion of Appalachian elements	• Student will have been asked to think about someone or something close to them that they have lost or anything that makes them sad. • Students will discuss Appalachian elements, Minick's inspiration for this poetry selection, and their own experiences or thoughts. • Students will work with their writing groups to write their own elegy poems. These poems will need to relate to the	• Students will be writing elegy poems. • Teacher should review elegy to be sure students have an understanding of this poetry form. • Students will be provided with activities and freewrites throughout the week to help them prepare to write their elegy poems.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type poems

	students' freewrites or the assignment to think about something lost.		
• Writing Workshop: Elegy Poem	• Students will finish composing their elegy poems. • Students will then meet with their writing groups to draft, edit, and revise their elegy poems. • Students will be given guidelines on how the writing group workshop will run.	• Students will use the elegy poems they have been preparing to complete writing workshop • Students will provide feedback on one another's poetry • This will be the first poem completed, which will be compiled and turned in at the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the poetry
• Introduction to an Free Verse	• Students will be provided with a definition of free verse poetry. • Writing groups will research this type of poetry. • Student groups will find an example of any type of free verse to read aloud to the class.	• Teacher will provide students with information about free verse poetry. • Teacher will walk around to each group and discuss the poetry type and help to research information and examples.	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.

• Review of free verse poetry form • Begin reading *Buffalo Dance: The Journey of York* by Frank X Walker	• Students will read *Buffalo Dance* • Students in the class will read this poetry in small group reading, all students of the group taking turns reading aloud.	• Students will read *Buffalo Dance* • Students will create their own discussion questions for the text and ask one another questions. • Students will also freewrite about the poetry and their connection to any parts or specific poems.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading.
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Buffalo Dance*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will continue reading in small group fashion • Students will create their own discussion questions for the text and ask one another questions. • Students will also freewrite about the poetry and their connection to any parts or specific poems.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of Appalachia through the	• Students will continue the poetry book from the	• Students will continue reading in small group fashion	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how

poetry • Continue reading *Buffalo Dance*	previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will create their own discussion questions for the text and ask one another questions. • Students will also freewrite about the poetry and their connection to any parts or specific poems.	each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of *Buffalo Dance* • Discussion of how these poems could be considered free verse • Discussion of Appalachian elements	• Student will have been asked to think about any memory that relates in some way to a poem of Walker's • Students will discuss Appalachian elements, Walker's inspiration for this poetry selection, and their own experiences or thoughts. • Students will work with their writing groups to write their own free verse poems. These	• Students will be writing free verse poems. • Teacher should review free verse to be sure students have an understanding of this poetry form. • Students will be provided with activities and freewrites throughout the week to help them prepare to write their free verse poems.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type poems

	poems will need to relate to the students' freewrites or the assignment to think a memory.		
• Writing Workshop: Free Verse Poem	• Students will finish composing their free verse poems. • Students will then meet with their writing groups to draft, edit, and revise their free verse poems. • Students will be given guidelines on how the writing group workshop will run.	• Students will use the free verse poems they have been preparing to complete writing workshop • Students will provide feedback on one another's poetry • This will be the second poem completed, which will be compiled and turned in at the end of the unit.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the poetry
• Introduction to • Narrative Poetry	• Students will be provided with a definition of narrative poetry. • Writing groups will research this type of poetry. • Student groups will find an example of any type of narrative poetry to read aloud	• Teacher will provide students with information about narrative poetry. • Teacher will walk around to each group and discuss the poetry type and help to research information and examples.	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.

	to the class.		
• Review of narrative poetry form • Begin reading *Kettle Bottom* by Diane Gilliam Fisher	• Students will read *Kettle Bottom* • Students in the class will read this poetry in partner reading, both students taking turns reading aloud.	• Students will read *Kettle Bottom* • Students will make KWL (know, what I hope to know, what I learned) charts as they read. Students will also create and discuss any questions with one another.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading.
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Kettle Bottom*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will read *Kettle Bottom* • Students will make KWL (know, what I hope to know, what I learned) charts as they read. Students will also create and discuss any questions with one another.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Kettle Bottom*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they	• Students will read *Kettle Bottom* • Students will make KWL (know, what I hope to know, what I learned) charts as they	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc.

	see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	read. Students will also create and discuss any questions with one another.	• Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of *Kettle Bottom* • Discussion of how these poems could be considered narrative poems poems • Discussion of Appalachian elements	• Student will have been asked to think about a story they can tell in the form of poetry • Students will discuss Appalachian elements, Gilliam Fishers's inspiration for this poetry selection, and their own experiences or thoughts. • Students will work with their writing groups to write their own narrative poems. These poems will need to relate to the students' freewrites or the assignment	• Students will be writing narrative poems. • Teacher should review narrative poems to be sure students have an understanding of this poetry form. • Students will be provided with activities and freewrites throughout the week to help them prepare to write their narrative poems.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type poems
• Writing	• Students will finish	• Students will use the	• Microsoft Word if

Workshop: Narrative Poem	composing their narrative poems. • Students will then meet with their writing groups to draft, edit, and revise their narrative poems. • Students will be given guidelines on how the writing group workshop will run.	narrative poems they have been preparing to complete writing workshop • Students will provide feedback on one another's poetry • This will be the third poem completed, which will be compiled and turned in at the end of the unit.	needed to type the poetry
• Introduction to Imagery Poetry	• Students will be provided with a definition of imagery poetry. • Writing groups will research this type of poetry. • Student groups will find an example of any type of imagery poetry to read aloud to the class.	• Teacher will provide students with information about imagery poetry. • Teacher will walk around to each group and discuss the poetry type and help to research information and examples.	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.
• Review of imagery poetry form • Begin reading *Abiding*	• Students will read *Abiding Appalachia* • Students in the class will read this poetry with their writing	• Students will read *Abiding Appalachia* • Students will provide questions and discussion	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the

Appalachian: Where Mountain and Atom Meet by Marilou Awiakta	groups in a "click or clunk" fashion, all students taking turns reading aloud. • "Click or Clunk" (Did everyone understand what we read? If you did not, write your clunks in your learning logs.) • Questions or comments are recorded by the group as they read and discussed		students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading.
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Abiding Appalchia*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will read *Abiding Appalachia* • Students in the class will read this poetry with their writing groups in a "click or clunk" fashion, all students taking turns reading aloud. • "Click or Clunk" (Did everyone understand what we read? If you did not, write your clunks in your learning logs.)	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"

		• Questions or comments are recorded by the group as they read and discussed	
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Abiding Appalachia*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will read *Abiding Appalachia* • Students in the class will read this poetry with their writing groups in a "click or clunk" fashion, all students taking turns reading aloud. • "Click or Clunk" (Did everyone understand what we read? If you did not, write your clunks in your learning logs.) • Questions or comments are recorded by the group as they read and discussed	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of *Abiding Appalachia* and researching the poems and	• Student will have been asked to consider what "home" means to them. (In other	• Students will be writing imagery poems. • Teacher should review imagery poetry to be	• Microsoft Word if needed to type poems

author • Discussion of how these poems could be considered imagery poems • Discussion of Appalachian elements	words, students would write a poem about their "home"). • Students will discuss Appalachian elements, Awiakta's inspiration for this poetry selection, and their own experiences or thoughts. • Students will work with their writing groups to write their own imagery poems. These poems will need to relate to the students' freewrites or the assignment	sure students have an understanding of this poetry form. • Students will be provided with activities and freewrites throughout the week to help them prepare to write their imagery poems.	
• Writing Workshop: Imagery Poem	• Students will finish composing their imagery poems. • Students will then meet with their writing groups to draft, edit, and revise their imagery poems. • Students will be	• Students will use the imagery poems they have been preparing to complete writing workshop • Students will provide feedback on one another's poetry • This will be the fourth poem completed,	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the poetry

	given guidelines on how the writing group workshop will run.	which will be compiled and turned in at the end of the unit.	
• Introduction to Lyric poetry	• Students will be provided with a definition of a lyric. • Writing groups will research this type of poetry. • Student groups will find an example of any type of lyric to read aloud to the class.	• Teacher will provide students with information about lyric poetry. • Teacher will walk around to each group and discuss the poetry type and help to research information and examples.	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.
• Review of lyric poetry form • Begin reading *Burning Heaven* by Jim Minick	• Students will read *Burning Heaven* • Students in the class will read this poetry in SSR (silent sustained reading) fashion. • Students will compile journal entries for poems they liked, connected to, etc.	• Students will read *Burning Heaven* • Students will make a running list of questions on the board of any thoughts or questions they may have.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading.
• Discussion of Appalachia through the	• Students will continue the poetry book from the	• Students will read *Burning Heaven* • Students in the class	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how

poetry • Continue reading *Burning Heaven*	previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	will read this poetry in SSR (silent sustained reading) fashion. • Students will compile journal entries for poems they liked, connected to, etc.	each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of Appalachia through the poetry • Continue reading *Burning Heaven*	• Students will continue the poetry book from the previous day • Students will discuss how they see Appalachian qualities in the poetry	• Students will read *Burning Heaven* • Students in the class will read this poetry in SSR (silent sustained reading) fashion. • Students will compile journal entries for poems they liked, connected to, etc.	• Discussion of what students believe the poems to mean, how each work relates on personal levels to the students, etc. • Students will complete brief freewrites each day of poetry reading. • Discussion on what makes this story "Appalachian"
• Discussion of *Burning Heaven* • Discussion of how these poems could be considered lyric poems	• Student will have been asked to talk to other generations of Appalachians (grandparents, parents, neighbors, coworkers, friends,	• Students will be writing lyric poems. • Teacher should review lyric to be sure students have an understanding of this poetry form.	• Microsoft Word if needed to type poems

• Discussion of Appalachian elements	etc.) • Students will discuss Appalachian elements, Minick's inspiration for this poetry selection, and their own experiences or thoughts. • Students will work with their writing groups to write their own lyric poems. These poems will need to relate to the students' freewrites or the assignment to think about something lost.	• Students will be provided with activities and freewrites throughout the week to help them prepare to write their lyric poems.	
• Writing Workshop: Lyric Poem	• Students will finish composing their lyric poems. • Students will then meet with their writing groups to draft, edit, and revise their lyric poems. • Students will be given guidelines on	• Students will use the lyric poems they have been preparing to complete writing workshop • Students will provide feedback on one another's poetry • This will be the fifth poem completed, which will be	• Microsoft Word if needed to type the poetry

	how the writing group workshop will run.	compiled and turned in at the end of the unit.	

Note: Appalachian poems will be used as a basis for this unit. Other poems could also be used or substituted.

Taking a Stand: Appalachian Advocacy

Overarching Goal	Student Learning Goals	Teaching Methods	Assessment/Technology
• Week prior to beginning the advocacy unit	• Students will be asked to complete five journal-type entries, outside of class, discussing issues and stereotypes they see in their communities. • These issues can be environmental, gender, equality, racism, abuse, familial, stereotypes, authoritative, etc. • Journals will be typed, two pages each.	• These journals will be used as a jumping off point for the advocacy unit. • This unit's goal is to have students consider the issues and stereotypes of Appalachia (or any region). • It raises awareness and also helps students find a "voice" for change and empowerment.	• Typed journal entries (Word processing program)
• Introduction to Appalachia and Advocacy Unit	• Students will be informed about Appalachia (things they already know	• Discussion of Appalachia • Teacher will make a running list of issues	• SmartBoard: running tab of thoughts, questions, facts, etc. • Also, encourage other

	about Appalachia, stereotypes, media, etc.) • Students will also use their journals of issues and the class will discuss some of their examples. • Discussion of Appalachia→ focus should be on the region the students live in. • Students will then complete brief research on the issues they discussed and any other issues they may find during their research processes.	and stereotypes that the students mention.	research endeavors for students to learn more about the region
• Advocacy Example 1: Teacher Example	• Students will be provided with research and other materials about coal mining, coal companies, and the future of coal	• Teacher will provide students with information about coal mining and its history in Appalachia. • Video clips and interviews will also be	• Internet resources to find examples and other research. • Students will be placed in groups to research and become informed about the

	mining in Appalachia. • A presentation and brief history of coal mining in Appalachia will be provided • Students and teacher will discuss what was learned and any questions.	presented: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfB0pBiJNgs • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JArYF8axBVY • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoOIB3_7bzU	topic. Students will make a list of questions and find the answers through research, which will then be emailed to the class or compiled and printed for future reference.
• Literature Excerpts: Reading Stations	• Students will be placed in five reading groups. • Around the room, the teacher will have found examples of excerpts, illustrating coal mining in some form. • Students will rotate to each station and read the literature provided. • Students will journal and take notes about what	• Teacher will provide discussion questions and literature excerpts for students to read. • Teacher will also rotate to each group to answer any questions or provide help.	• Excerpts can include: *Storming Heaven, Kettle Bottom,* Home Guides: "Positives and Negatives of Coal Energy Sources, *Big Coal, Mountaintop Removal* (film), *Strange as this Weather has Been,* etc.

	they learn and any questions they may have		
• Class Debates	• Students will be placed on debate teams • Students will discuss, in their debate groups, the pros, cons, and other thoughts and information (may even complete more research) • Students will be provided with debate guidelines on how to argue appropriately.	• Teacher will provide guidelines and an example of positive and negative argumentative tactics. • Teacher will mediate the debates. • Students will complete a brief writing assignment at the end of the debate on how they feel now about the topic discussed.	
• Writing Assignment	• Students will complete a writing assignment addressing the topic, their knowledge, and opinions • Students will discuss how they see this topic or issue in Appalachia,	• Teacher will provide a sample writing assignment for the students to view. • Students will have extra time to complete this assignment if needed.	• Students will be writing blogs or other informal social media-style articles that can be read by classmates, friends, parents, etc., and this will be used as a resource to inform others about the topic discussed and what has been learned by

	and advocate for a solution.		the students.
• Advocacy Example 2: Student Choice	• Students will be take the running list discussed the first week, and students will be given the choice on which topic they would like to discuss next. • Students will get into their groups to research different topics in stations. • Stations: literature on the topic, statistics on the topic, history of the topic, film or media clips of the topic, and news and future of this topic in the region. • Students will research in each station, providing the teacher with their findings at the end of class.	• Teacher will pull up the running list of topics from the previous week. • Teacher will use the list to compile the information for the rest of the class week, and the teacher will also complete their own research to provide information for the students.	• Internet resources to find examples and other research. • Students will be placed in groups to research and become informed about the topic. Students will make a list of questions and find the answers through research, which will then be emailed to the class or compiled and printed for future reference.

• Literature Excerpts: Reading Stations	• Students will be placed in five reading groups. • Around the room, the teacher will have found examples of excerpts, illustrating coal mining in some form. • Students will rotate to each station and read the literature provided. • Students will journal and take notes about what they learn and any questions they may have	• Teacher will provide discussion questions and literature excerpts for students to read. • Teacher will also rotate to each group to answer any questions or provide help.	• Excerpts used for groups will be determined based on the lists provided by the students and teacher findings.
• Class Debates	• Students will be placed on debate teams • Students will discuss, in their debate groups, the pros, cons, and other thoughts and information (may	• Teacher will provide guidelines and an example of positive and negative argumentative tactics. • Teacher will mediate the debates. • Students will complete a brief writing	

	even complete more research) • Students will be provided with debate guidelines on how to argue appropriately.	assignment at the end of the debate on how they feel now about the topic discussed.	
• Writing Assignment	• Students will complete a writing assignment addressing the topic, their knowledge, and opinions • Students will discuss how they see this topic or issue in Appalachia, and advocate for a solution.	• Teacher will provide a sample writing assignment for the students to view. • Students will have extra time to complete this assignment if needed.	• Students will be asked at the beginning of the week to meet with someone(s) to discuss this topic. Students will come to class with responses and other opinions on the topic discussed. • Students will write a compare and contrast essay on their own thoughts with ways others may think. Students will need to find someone that believes differently than themselves to use as a counterargument.
• Advocacy Example 3: Student Choice	• Students will be take the running list discussed the first	• Teacher will pull up the running list of topics from the	• Internet resources to find examples and other research.

	week, and students will be given the choice on which topic they would like to discuss next. • Students will get into their groups to research different topics in stations. • Stations: literature on the topic, statistics on the topic, history of the topic, film or media clips of the topic, and news and future of this topic in the region. • Students will research in each station, providing the teacher with their findings at the end of class.	previous week. • Teacher will use the list to compile the information for the rest of the class week, and the teacher will also complete their own research to provide information for the students.	• Students will be placed in groups to research and become informed about the topic. Students will make a list of questions and find the answers through research, which will then be emailed to the class or compiled and printed for future reference.
• Literature Excerpts: Reading Stations	• Students will be placed in five reading groups. • Around the room, the teacher will	• Teacher will provide discussion questions and literature excerpts for students to read. • Teacher will also	• Excerpts used for groups will be determined based on the lists provided by the students and

	have found examples of excerpts, illustrating coal mining in some form. • Students will rotate to each station and read the literature provided. • Students will journal and take notes about what they learn and any questions they may have	rotate to each group to answer any questions or provide help.	teacher findings.
• Class Debates	• Students will be placed on debate teams • Students will discuss, in their debate groups, the pros, cons, and other thoughts and information (may even complete more research) • Students will be provided with debate guidelines	• Teacher will provide guidelines and an example of positive and negative argumentative tactics. • Teacher will mediate the debates. • Students will complete a brief writing assignment at the end of the debate on how they feel now about the topic discussed.	

	on how to argue appropriately.		
• Writing Assignment	• Students will complete a writing assignment addressing the topic, their knowledge, and opinions • Students will discuss how they see this topic or issue in Appalachia, and advocate for a solution.	• Teacher will provide a sample writing assignment for the students to view. • Students will have extra time to complete this assignment if needed.	• Students will be asked to write a formal news article, with photos (from the internet or own collection) on the topic they have chosen for the week. • These news articles will be graded on the formal-style, content, grammatical cleanness, research, informative qualities, etc. • Students will also work with a partner to edit and revise the articles.
• Advocacy Example 4: Student Choice	• Students will be take the running list discussed the first week, and students will be given the choice on which topic they would like to discuss next. • Students will get	• Teacher will pull up the running list of topics from the previous week. • Teacher will use the list to compile the information for the rest of the class week, and the teacher will	• Internet resources to find examples and other research. • Students will be placed in groups to research and become informed about the topic. Students will make a list of

	into their groups to research different topics in stations. • Stations: literature on the topic, statistics on the topic, history of the topic, film or media clips of the topic, and news and future of this topic in the region. • Students will research in each station, providing the teacher with their findings at the end of class.	also complete their own research to provide information for the students.	questions and find the answers through research, which will then be emailed to the class or compiled and printed for future reference.
• Literature Excerpts: Reading Stations	• Students will be placed in five reading groups. • Around the room, the teacher will have found examples of excerpts, illustrating coal mining in some form.	• Teacher will provide discussion questions and literature excerpts for students to read. • Teacher will also rotate to each group to answer any questions or provide help.	• Excerpts used for groups will be determined based on the lists provided by the students and teacher findings.

	• Students will rotate to each station and read the literature provided. • Students will journal and take notes about what they learn and any questions they may have		
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• Writing Assignment	• Students will complete a writing assignment addressing the	• Teacher will provide a sample writing assignment for the students to view.	• By this point, students will have written informal media articles, argumentative

	topic, their knowledge, and opinions • Students will discuss how they see this topic or issue in Appalachia, and advocate for a solution.	• Students will have extra time to complete this assignment if needed. • Students will receive extra credit if they choose to mail their letter or email their responses to the appropriate office or individual. This will not be required. • Lesson on formal letter writing will be provided.	essays, and formal pieces. • Students will be asked to write formal letters to the advocacy group of their choice based on the topic chosen. • For example, if the topic was coal mining, students would be allowed to write positive or negative letters to coal companies, Appalachian advocacy programs, specific individuals affected, etc. • Research on these organizations and/or people will also be completed in the course of this week's unit and topic.
• Advocacy Final Project	• Students will be allowed to complete any type of project based on any topic of an	• Teacher will provide guidelines for the projects. • Discussion of written elements that are	• Internet resources to find examples and other research. • Students can work in groups or individually,

	Appalachian issue or stereotype, except for topics discussed in class. • Student projects will be required to have a written element, at least one element must be of a formal nature.	required. • Students must be aware and informative about the topic: providing a history, statistics, differing views, their own opinions, written excerpts, and a list of researched references.	but each person much turn in a project or discussion of roles each student completed if group projects are completed.
• Students will continue work on advocacy projects	• Students will continue work for multiple days	• Teacher will be available for any assistance or questions • Students will continue work.	
• Class Review and Group Workshop	• Students will bring the work completed thus far on their projects for a check-in with the teacher. • Students will work in groups to receive feedback, critiques, etc. about their projects. • Students will continue work on	• Teacher will see each person's project progress. • Teacher will provide guidelines and monitor the groups as they work editing, revising, and continuing work on projects.	

	their projects.		
• Advocacy Project Presentations	• Students will take turns presenting their projects to the class.	• Teacher will provide presentation guidelines • Teacher will also need to provide an example project and presentation.	• Students will provide anonymous written feedback for their classmates. • This feedback will include: things learned, questions, positives about the project and presentation, and any other comments (must be appropriate.)

Note: Teacher will only decide on the issue students will discuss the first week. Students will be responsible to decide on which issues and stereotypes they deem important, and the teacher will then be deciding on specific articles, literature, videos, etc. to use in class. Students can also be responsible for finding literature, research, and other items to supplement class learning goals.