

Interdisciplinary unit planner

Teacher(s)	Stephanie Gronholz	Subject groups	Language and literature: English Individuals and Societies		
Unit title	Deliberate Choices	MYP year	5 (10th grade)	Unit duration	25 hours

Inquiry: establishing the purpose of an interdisciplinary unit

Purpose of integration	
<p>In this unit, students will use historical sources and Transcendentalist literature to understand how individuals like Henry David Thoreau made choices not in a vacuum, but in a larger context. Making choices about how to live “deliberately”, as Thoreau is famous for having said about his time at Walden, implicates us in social, political, cultural and economic systems that may challenge our own sense of what is right. Thoreau’s literature helps us understand one individual’s reflections on his choices; primary and secondary sources relevant to 19th-century America help us understand the context in which he acted (or not) on these thoughts. By studying history and literature together, students will engage in deeper learning about the interplay of context and choice. The literature they create about their participation in a contemporary system will be made the richer when they understand the current context in which they are expressing their ideas about morality, or what is right.</p>	
Key concept(s)/(related concepts)	Global context
Systems Choice, context	Identities and relationships Exploration: moral reasoning and ethical judgment
Statement of inquiry	
Individuals make choices in context which complicate their participation in morally complex systems.	

Inquiry questions

Factual

What are the characteristics of systems?

What are the necessary consequences of choices?

Conceptual

Why is the context of literature important to consider?

How is history shaped by individuals' choices?

Debatable

What creates our moral conscience?

To what extent are we able to transcend the systems in society and live deliberately?

Summative assessment—interdisciplinary performance(s) of understanding

Interdisciplinary criteria:

Ai: demonstrate relevant disciplinary factual, conceptual and/or procedural knowledge

Bi: synthesize disciplinary knowledge to demonstrate interdisciplinary understanding

Ci: use appropriate strategies to communicate interdisciplinary understanding effectively

Cii: document sources using recognized conventions

Di: reflect on the development of their own interdisciplinary understanding

Dii: evaluate the benefits and limitations of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and ways of knowing in specific situations

Task:

Students will choose from a class-generated list of contemporary issues and draft personal statement of commitment to “choose deliberately.” This statement can take the form of an editorial for the school newspaper, a lunchtime stair speech, a piece of artwork with an accompanying artist’s statement for the entry hall gallery, or an image-based post for distribution on the school’s social media platform. MLA citations for historical, literary, or contemporary sources should be included in a clear and authentic manner.

An accompanying written reflection will give students the opportunity to discuss their process as well as the benefit and limitations of interdisciplinary learning.

Approaches to learning (ATL) skill identification and practice

Communication

- Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences.
 - To create the final product, students will practice this skill through a self-editing process that involves highlighting three key words and explaining their impact on the specific audience.
- Read critically and for comprehension.
 - In reading the literature and primary sources, students will identify and discuss main ideas supported by evidence.

Research

- Make connections between various sources of information.
 - In their journals, students will write to make connections between Thoreau's writings and the primary and secondary sources they are learning about in individuals and societies.

Reflection

- Consider ethical, cultural and environmental implications.
 - The summative task asks students to consider their own participation in systems that have ethical, cultural and environmental implications. Students will reflect on their participation through journal entries and Socratic seminars.
- Keep a journal to record reflections.
 - In order to reflect on interdisciplinary learning and ways of knowing, students will respond to prompts in a journal. Excerpts from the journal can then be included in the draft.

Action: Teaching and learning through interdisciplinary inquiry

Disciplinary grounding	
Subject: Language and literature	Subject: Individuals and societies
<p>MYP objectives:</p> <p>Ai: analyse the content, context, language, structure, technique and style of the text(s) and the relationship among texts</p> <p>Aii: analyse the effects of the creator's choices on an audience</p> <p>Biii: use referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style suitable to the context and intention</p> <p>Ci: produce texts that demonstrate insight, imagination and sensitivity while exploring and reflecting critically on new perspectives and ideas arising from personal engagement with the creative process</p> <p>Ciii: select relevant details and examples to develop ideas</p> <p>Dii: write and speak in a register and style that serve the context and intention</p>	<p>MYP objectives:</p> <p>Aii: demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific context and concepts through developed descriptions, explanations and examples</p> <p>Di: discuss concepts, issues, models, visual representations and theories</p> <p>Dii: synthesize information to make valid, well-supported arguments</p>
<p>Related concept:</p> <p>Point of view</p>	<p>Related concept:</p> <p>Resources</p>
<p>Content:</p> <p><u>Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcendentalism as a literary movement <p><u>Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close reading skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vocabulary in context ○ Main idea ○ Citing evidence 	<p>Content:</p> <p><u>Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Revolution • Abolitionism in the North <p><u>Skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary source analysis • Geographic literary (map reading) • Visible thinking – art analysis

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Thesis development <p><u>Understanding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The ways that contextual elements influence a writer’s point of view •The function of literary texts as vehicles for exploring and expressing moral beliefs •The process by which in understanding someone else’s point of view through literature, we are prompted to explore our own ideas 	<p><u>Understanding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The interconnected nature of social, political, cultural and economic systems •“People make choices, and choices make history.” (Facing History’s motto)
<p>Disciplinary learning engagements and teaching strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gallery Walk Provocation: Students will rotate through stations in the classroom that feature the following texts, each of which is about the choices we make in life. At each station, they will use the Visible Thinking routine of “See, Think, Wonder” in a graphic organizer, reconvening at table group to discuss common observations, insights or questions that might connect the texts. Follow up with time for making the first entry in a reflection journal that is to be shared across both disciplines. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mary Oliver’s “Summer Day” poem b. Rush’s “Free Will” lyrics c. Video of Peter Singer explaining his “Shallow Pond” philosophy 2. Conduct a Socratic Seminar using the unit’s first debatable question as a launching point. When necessary, intervene to guide students to understanding the role of context in the formation of moral reasoning. Students can use their reflection journal to generate questions and reply to them in writing. 3. View the Walden Woods Project’s video on Walden pond. Pause at intervals to check for understanding. Possible prompts might be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How do the images and sounds in the film make you feel? b. How have Thoreau and Walden Pond influenced the conservationists? c. What surprises you about Thoreau? d. What parallels to today’s issues do you see? 	<p>Disciplinary learning engagements and teaching strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorm a list of changes that have occurred in our society from the time that students were born to this point in history. (They might identify cell phone technology, virtual reality, inflation, climate change, etc.) Discuss: Which of these changes led to issues that are morally complex? Record reflections on the discussion in a reflection journal that is to be shared across both disciplines. 2. Analyse two maps that depict railways and other modes of transportation in the mid-19th century. Using the Visible Thinking routine of “See, Think, Wonder,” prompt student to draw conclusions about the consequences of this expansion on human <i>and</i> natural resources. What was gained by the choice to expand transportation? What was lost? You may also choose to display and discuss a map of the Underground Railroad, drawing connections between the two systems of movement. 3. Follow up on the topic of the expansion of railroads by exploring the Metropolitan Museum essay about the expansion of industry after 1840. Give students a platform for posting their questions and connections, such as a Padlet or a set of sticky notes near the whiteboard. 4. Explore the online exhibit “Antislavery in Concord” from the Concord Free Public Library. Highlight the nature of primary source documents as a way of knowing the past. What can we learn? What is left out? Guide students to understanding that this was Thoreau’s context for his writing. 5. Assign the introduction to Sandy Petrulionis’ book. Give students an opportunity to journal about the influences in their own life in terms of the development of their moral reasoning. 6. Conduct a “Circle of Obligation” analysis of Concord in the 1840’s and 50’s.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Read out loud selections from “Walking” to the class as a way of modelling how to navigate archaic text. Pause to think out loud through essential vocabulary words and sentences. Then discuss or write about Thoreau’s use of nature as a way of knowing and discerning his own moral conscience.5. Read the excerpt from <i>Walden</i> where Thoreau addresses the railroad tracks and the Irish workers who laid them. Discuss the main idea about technology that Thoreau seems to present in this piece. Allow students to journal about the “rails that ride them” in today’s society. (Then be sure to point out, as geologist Robert Thorson does, that Thoreau’s plaster walls in the cabin were made from the industrial residue of this rail project!)6. Conduct a shared reading of “Civil Disobedience”. Guide the students through annotating the text for evidence that supports the idea that Thoreau was expressing his moral conscience in this piece as a result of having spent the night in jail. (In other words, it is his writing about the experience that led to a greater ripple of protest, not the act of not paying his taxes in and of itself.)7. Independently read selected excerpts of “Slavery in Massachusetts”. Using the close reading skills they have developed earlier in the unit (vocabulary and sentence deconstruction, identification of main idea, selection of supporting evidence), have students write a “mini essay” or short constructed response that articulates what Thoreau believed was the morally correct position on the topic of slavery <i>and why</i>.8. Using the conventions of the MLA, create an annotated bibliography of all of the sources that have been explored in language and literature. This can become a resource during the creation of the summative task for this unit.9. Prompt students to reflect in their journal about what the study of literature has contributed to their understanding of the statement of inquiry. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Using the conventions of the MLA, create an annotated bibliography of all of the sources that have been explored in individuals and societies. This can become a resource during the creation of the summative task for this unit.8. Prompt students to reflect in their journal about what the study of history has contributed to their understanding of the statement of inquiry. |
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Interdisciplinary learning process

Interdisciplinary learning experiences and teaching strategies:

1. Generate a list of contemporary issues that our world is facing. Using the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development might be a starting point.
2. For two or three of the issues, create a concept map that defines the characteristics of the issue as a system. Include who is involved in the system – and in what ways.
3. Using a World Café or Socratic Seminar protocol, give students an opportunity to discuss five or six of the issues.
4. Prompt students to journal a response to the second debatable question.
5. Provide workshop time for students to select their product format, develop a commitment statement (thesis), and craft their project.
 - a. Review journals to identify personal insights.
 - b. Review literature and primary and secondary sources to identify possible quotations for inclusion in the project.
 - c. Craft a thesis statement and get feedback from a trio of peers.
 - d. Conduct a self-edit by highlighting at least three key words in the draft and annotating them for their impact on the specific audience (the school community).
 - e. Write a reflective memo that meets the Criterion D objectives. Use the frame “I used to..., but now I...” to kickstart the process.

Formative assessment:

- ✓ World Café/Socratic Seminar exit ticket: How do these contemporary issues impact the life you're living? What is a system you are participating in even though you know it's against your moral conscience? What are systems that you are helping to improve through your choices?
- ✓ Thesis triad
 - Students will give two of their peers feedback using the Praise, Question, Prompt protocol.

Differentiation:

- ✓ Audio versions of the texts
- ✓ A printed video viewing guide with space to jot notes during the teacher-led pauses
- ✓ Sentence frames for the discussions and journal prompts
- ✓ Quote banks for the summative task products

Resources

Student journals, which include reflections on their own experiences

LL Provocations:

- “Summer Day” by Mary Oliver: <https://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/133.html>

- Lyrics to “Free Will” by Rush: <https://genius.com/Rush-freewill-lyrics>
- Peter Singer’s “Shallow Pond”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sagg2C30RMk>

Walden Woods Project film: <https://www.walden.org/walden-film/>

LL Texts by H.D. Thoreau:

- “Walking”
- Railroad excerpt from *Walden*
- “Civil Disobedience”
- “Slavery in Massachusetts”

IS Texts:

- Railroad maps:
 - <https://www.loc.gov/item/98688376/>
 - <https://www.loc.gov/item/98688313/>
 - <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/maps/undergroundrailroad/>
- “Industrialism and Conflict in America: 1840-1875”: https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/indu/hd_indu.htm
- “Antislavery in Concord” exhibit from the Concord Free Public Library: <https://concordlibrary.org/special-collections/antislavery/>
- Introduction from *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau’s Concord* by Sandra Petrulionis

Frameworks/resources for teaching and learning:

- Facing History (specifically the Circle of Obligation protocol): <https://www.facinghistory.org/educator-resources>
- Harvard Project Zero’s Visible Thinking Routines (specifically See, Think, Wonder and I Used To But Now I): http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/VisibleThinking_html_files/VisibleThinking1.html
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

Reflection: considering the planning, process and impact of interdisciplinary inquiry

Prior to teaching the unit	During teaching	After teaching the unit