CURR 440: Interdisciplinary Collaboration Project

Annotated Bibliography for Texts & Materials

**ENGLISH: POETRY**

**Andersen, S. (2013, October 12). Sometimes writing is SCARY [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/yaloveblog/status/389106124093267968**  
        Students will interpret this tweet - stating whether they agree or disagree with its statement - when the English teacher introduces the class poetry blog that they will be using to share and analyze student-generated texts: the historical biopoems and the slam poems. It will ease students into a conversation about appropriate blog etiquette and the universal fear of peer revision and, therefore, the importance of the blog being a safe, comfortable online learning environment. The statement is provided in this format - a tweet - to offer a small bridge to the S.S. Twitter feed, acting to familiarize students with Twitter's language, use, and appearance.

**Angelou, M. (n.d.) Still I rise. Retrieved from http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/still-i-rise/**  
        Through a close reading of this poem, students will examine how address (pronoun switch: “you” and “I”) and diction (word choice) impacts the tone of a poem and appeals to the pathos of its audience. The knowledge and skills gained through this analysis of “Still I Rise” will appear in the ELA final project, since students must write a slam poem that puts a narrative - more emotional, than factual - spin on a modern-day topic about racism. And the slam poem that students write must include an unidentified, but implied, "you.” Students will practice writing to an implied “you” through several creative writing prompts after the close reading.   
  
**Avary, B. (2013, October 14). Everyone used to dream [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/TheRocketSummer/status/389637206580551680**  
        Students will interpret this tweet - "Everyone used to dream. You still need to dream" - after they read a blackout poem and before they listen to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. With the blackout poem introducing students to the idea that it is customary and inevitable for one's pursuit of a dream to be met with hardship and obstacles, the tweet will prompt students to brainstorm why someone would suggest the necessity of dreams they result in hardship. The discussion will frame how students will analyze Dr. King’s speech (why did African-Americans choose to continue fighting for their dream of equality despite all the arrests, murders, and hate?). The tweet form of this quote is presented to students to serve as a superficial bridge to the S.S. Twitter feed (breeding familiarity with its language, use, appearance) and used almost as Critical Lens practice.

**Button Poetry (2013a). Dylan Garity - 'giants' [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZE5L2X8fb\_k**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. The day of exposure to slam poetry is just meant to familiarize students with the genre through a plethora of examples. By recoding the author’s purpose for each slam poem they watch, students will begin to realize the real-life function of poetry. During the exposure, students will record differences and similarities between slam poetry and tradition written poetry on a Venn Diagram as a during-reading/listening activity. This poem is about man's foolish desire to be "big" - famous and all-powerful. In order to be included on the list, the chosen twelve slam poems had to be on a topic that adolescents could relate to and understand without needing background knowledge, couldn't be one of the famous, viral performances that students would immediately find if they searched slam poetry on YouTube themselves, and had to be relatively appropriate and straightforward language, not too clouded by metaphoric language. Such requirements would allow students to independently navigate the slam poems.

**Button Poetry (2013b). Javon Johnson 'cuz he's black' (NPS 2013) [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9Wf8y\_5Yn4**  
        After listening to Johnson's poem, students will interpret the effect of its literary elements, paying special attention to allusion and simile, on a written transcript. The poem will lead to a discussion of modern-day racism. This poem will introduce students to spoken-word poetry, with is a component of the unit's summative assessment. By looking at the literary elements' effect on the poem's theme and message, students will examine the author's purpose/opinion and understand how it is a social/political commentary. The poem's contemplation of modern-day racism offers a bridge to the history section of this unit, updating its content.

**Button Poetry (2013c). Neil Hilborn - 'OCD' (Rustbelt 2013) [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\_embedded&v=vnKZ4pdSU-s**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch, as aforementioned in a previous annotation. This poem is about the effect of losing love.

**CNN (2001). Map of Kabul, Afghanistan [Image]. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/views/y/2001/01/robertson.afghan.jan25/**

In the introductory lesson of this poetry unit, students will be reading a non-fiction article form *BBC News* that describes a secret female poetry club in Kabul, Afghanistan that uses poetry as a form of political expression and resistance. Showing students a map of Afghanistan will help them ground their thinking about the poetry club.

**Cullen, C. (1925). Incident. Retrieved from http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/incident/**

Written prior to the African-American Civil Rights Movement, this is an example poem that showcases how individuals did use poetry as a means of civil disobedience and expression during that time period even before activists started making waves. Juxtaposed with three other poems from around that same time period, students will analyze this poem in order to understand how its use of point of view and a dynamic character (narrator) helps get its theme across. This poem is about the effect of racist slurs. Students will use their knowledge learned in the parallel social studies unit to help them decipher the allusion and poem.

**Daily News (2004). Daily News covers of Sean Bell shooting coverage [Image]. Retrieved from http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/sean-bell-daily-news-covers-gallery-1.12620**

To help students understand the purpose of Javon Johnson’s allusion to Sean Bell in his slam poem, “Cuz He’s Black,” students will look at a font-page newspaper heading about the incident. This will give students a quick, general idea of the story behind the allusion without bogging them down with an extensive, time-consuming newspaper article or summary (rationale: don’t unnecessarily increase cognitive burden because extensive background is unnecessary for deciphering the effect of the allusion). Additionally, it is a primary source, paralleling their primary source analyzes in their social studies class (i.e. Montgomery Bus Integration handout, etc.).

**Daily News (2011). Gal\_louima4 [Image]. Retrieved from http://blogs.democratandchronicle.com/youngprofessionals/?p=2871**

To help students understand the purpose of Javon Johnson’s allusion to Abner Louima in his slam poem, “Cuz He’s Black,” students will look at a font-page newspaper heading about the incident. This will give students a quick, general idea of the story behind the allusion without bogging them down with an extensive, time-consuming newspaper article or summary (rationale: don’t unnecessarily increase cognitive burden because extensive background is unnecessary for deciphering the effect of the allusion).

**Doucet, L. (2013). Dangerous 'truth': The Kabul women's poetry club. BBC News: Asia. Retrieved from http://ht.ly/q2jYk**  
        Through a close reading of this non-fiction article as the first day of this critical literacy poetry unit, students will explore the idea of poetry as an effective means of social and political expression, protest, and commentary. Based on the Afghanistan women's rationale for choosing spoken-word poetry as an outlet, students will form their own opinions and arguments about whether they think that poetry is an effective and worthwhile means of activism. This modern-day example of poetry being used as nonviolent protest shows students the real-life function of poetry through an introduction to the importance of understanding author's purpose.  
  
**Doucet, L. (2013). Lyse Doucet meets the women of Kabul's poetry club [Video File]. BBC News: Asia. Retrieved from http://ht.ly/q2jYk**  
        This video offers students a visual depiction of the Afghanistan women's poetry club that they will read about in the non-fiction article. It caters to visual and auditory learners. This modern-day example of poetry being used as nonviolent protest shows students the real-life function of poetry. Students will benefit from seeing the physical setting of Afghanistan and the women recite their original poetry, as it will ground their thinking about the article just as the map will.   
  
**Duarte, N. (2011). Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Speech analyzed by Nancy Duarte [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l39CL0t-jyM**  
        This video shows the ways in which Nancy Duarte deconstructed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech," ultimately highlighting where its literary elements were incorporated - like allusion, metaphor, imagery, etc. Durante also analyzes Dr. King's inflection and audience, arguing that he speaks poetically (in short bursts) and audience clapping, at times, specifically aligns with Dr. King's metaphors. This video is the rationale for why Dr. King's speech is incorporated into the poetry unit, as it challenges student preconceptions of poetry and expands their thinking about poetry form. Students could be shown the first couple of minutes or the teacher can pull out quotes from it to address Durante’s findings quicker.

**Edublogs (2013). English poetry blog: Standing up to equality [Blog]. Retrieved from http://gainingequality.edublogs.org/**  
 Students will work with the English Poetry Blog twice during the unit as a means of sharing, reading, and analyzing the student-generated poems they create throughout the unit. Primarily, it is a component of the unit’s final project. Students will be required to upload their original slam poems to the blog. Students will then have two in-class days to read and analyze their peers’ poems (for effect of literary elements, author purpose, tone, and theme, and not for whether they like or dislike the poem, not for a reader-response), just as they have done throughout the unit on the in-class poetry. This prompts students to see value in their own texts (and to see a purpose for their writing beyond a grade, since the blog gives them an audience), as their work can also be analyzed for literary elements and themes just as the “professional” in-class poetry can be. To scaffold students into this peer analysis, students will upload their historical Biopoems prior to the final project and practice (in a lower-risk activity) navigating the blog.

**Faux Pas Productions (2013). ‘Panic button collector’ by Andrea Gibson. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6ZvYtIA98E**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about fears, insecurities, and acceptance. It alludes to Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Francisco, R. (2013). Complainers by Rudy Francisco [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrh1JlP8R2E**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch, as aforementioned. This poem is about man's tendency to complain about trivial things and forgetting the gift of just being alive. It offers a similar message to Carlos Andres Gomez's slam poem, “Pet Peeve,” from the list.

**Gomez, C. A. (2011). Carlos Andres Gomez performs 'pet peeve' in NYC [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pubal2ob3Fw**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about man's tendency to complain about trivial things. It offers a similar message to Rudy Francisco's slam poem, “Complainers,” from the list.

**Guzman, A. (Writer) & Corn, R. (Director). (2013). Puttin’ on the ritz [Television series episode]. In B. Beers et al., *Grey’s anatomy.* Los Angeles, CA: ABC Studios.**

This episode of the TV show, *Grey’s Anatomy*, offers a visual representation of Dylan Thomas’s main advice in “Do Not Go Gently into that Good Night.” Therefore, to aid students’ literal comprehension of that poem, the video clip will be screened prior to a close reading of the poem. Therefore, it frontloads the poem with a real-life example of the context in which Thomas’s advice would be appropriate. The episode uses foil characters. Both are candidates for hospice care, but for different reasons. Dr. Webber refuses treatment of a curable state. Mr. Steers has terminal cancer that is untreatable, but demands that the doctors come up with a plan of action for his survival. Dr. Bailey comes in as the role of the narrator in Thomas’s poem. She urges Dr. Webber to be more like Mr. Steers. She urges him to fight for life, not accept death passively. Students will compare and contrast these foil characters in a Venn Diagram. In an Exit Ticket at the end of the close reading of Thomas’s poem, students will summarize the poem, using the characters from the TV episode to supplement their explanations.

**Holmon, O. (2010). Omar Holmon peforms 'anatomy of a prayer' [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eE3wiBJExM**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about a mother’s attitude toward her cancer diagnosis. Its message is reminiscent of Dylan Thomas's poem (that was analyzed in a two-day class lesson), "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night."

**HuffPost Books (2013, November 20). "There's plenty that poetry cannot do..." [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/HuffPostBooks/status/403350735296794624**  
        This is another tweet that will be used as an informal means of Critical Lens practice. The specific Twitter form, as aforementioned with the other included tweets, serves merely to familiarize students with Twitter's use, language, appearance (to increase student exposure to Twitter before they must use it in their social studies Fishbowl Discussion). Mary Szybist's quote from her acceptance speech for the 2013 National Book Award for Poetry will be used to get students' thinking about the affordances and constraints of poetry (which will be recorded in a T-chart): what it can and cannot do. Students will discuss whether they think political activism is one of the "miracles" of poetry or if it is one of the things it cannot do.

**Hughes, L. (1902-1965). Merry-Go-Round. Retrieved from http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/merry-go-round/**

Written during the African-American Civil Rights Movement, this is an example poem that showcases how individuals did use poetry as a means of civil disobedience and expression during that time period. Hughes is one of the most famous poets from that time period. Juxtaposed with three other poems from around that same time period (including lesser known civil rights poets), students will analyze this poem in order to understand how its use of allusion – the Jim Crow Laws – affects the poem’s theme and purpose. This poem is about a child’s inability to understand that the North doesn’t have racial segregation. Students will use their knowledge learned in the parallel social studies unit to help them decipher the allusion and poem.

**King, M. L. Jr. (1963). Transcript of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I have a dream' speech. Fox News. Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/us/2013/08/27/transcript-martin-luther-king-jr-have-dream-speech/**  
        Students will read a typescript of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech after listening to it in order for close reading and literary element analysis. The speech is incorporated into the poetry unit not only to overlap with the social studies' African-American Civil Rights Movement, but to challenge students' conception of poetry, since Nancy Durante claims Dr. King's oral performance is more like poetry reading than lecture speech. Students will ultimately compare and contrast Dr. King's speech with a modern-day slam poem by Javon Johnson to assess the stance each speaker takes against inequality for African-Americans. They will look at how each speaker advocates nonviolence, yet Dr. King is more optimistic about the effects of such an approach.   
  
**King, M. L. Jr. (2013). Martin Luther King - I have a dream on August 28, 1963 [Sous-titres & subtitles] [FULL SPEECH] [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRIF4\_WzU1w**  
        Students will listen to Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech because, as noted by Nancy Durante, Dr. King delivers his speech in "short bursts" more reminiscent of poetry than long-winded lecture speech. Therefore, it is important for students to hear the speech, as it will connect it why it is being incorporated into a poetry unit. Also, pointing out to students the distinct correlation between Dr. King’s first metaphor and the audience’s first round of applause will give students a more concrete idea of the effect of literary elements.

**Lopez, J. (2013). Parks & Rec - Slam Poetry [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oh3f9Uhhdoo**  
    This video will be used when students are introduced to their ELA final project requirements. As a popular culture tie-in to a television series that some students may be familiar with, the video offers a humorous way for the teacher to make the point that the grade for their write-your-own slam poems will not be based on oral performance but on use of literary elements and integration of research. The video will make the assignment less intimidating because it presents the idea that "anything can be a slam poem," so students shouldn't worry about what their poems “sound” like ("sound" isn’t the only qualification of a slam poem). Content, not oral performance, is valued in the final project. This video will help the teacher make that point.

**Mohitbahi (2007). And still I rise [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqo50LSZ0**

Students will be shown this video of Maya Angelou reciting her poem, "Still I Rise." They will listen to the poem before they read it, since the recitation allows students to hear the shifts in tone that they will later decode by diction and pronoun change in the written text.

**New York Post (2012). Amadou-Diallo-was-shot-41-times-by-the-NYPD [Image]. Retrieved from http://livingthedream.org/2012/10/03/pct-ii-round-of-64-day-7/** To help students understand the purpose of Javon Johnson’s allusion to Amadou Diallo in his slam poem, “Cuz He’s Black,” students will look at a font-page newspaper heading about the incident. This will give students a quick, general idea of the story behind the allusion without bogging them down with an extensive, time-consuming newspaper article or summary (rationale: don’t unnecessarily increase cognitive burden because extensive background is unnecessary for deciphering the effect of the allusion).

**New York Post (2013). Trayvon Martin, Zimmerman murder charge headlines NY Post, Daily News 041212 [Image]. Retrieved from http://sfbayview.com/2013/trayvon-martin-killer-george-zimmermans-attorneys-fabricate-evidence/trayvon-martin-zimmerman-murder-charge-headlines-ny-post-daily-news-041212/**

To help students understand the purpose of Javon Johnson’s allusion to Trayvon Martin in his slam poem, “Cuz He’s Black,” students will look at a font-page newspaper heading about the incident. This will give students a quick, general idea of the story behind the allusion without bogging them down with an extensive, time-consuming newspaper article or summary (rationale: don’t unnecessarily increase cognitive burden because extensive background is unnecessary for deciphering the effect of the allusion).

**Paducah2 (2013). Samuel Hawkins - 12:01 [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\_embedded&v=1R2e0SwJ2ek**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch, as outlined in a previous annotation. This poem's theme relates to the theme of the Maya Angelou poem, "Still I Rise," that was looked at in a class lesson: persevere despite the obstacles and hardships.

**Quinquangular. (2012, September 30). The dream engine [Image]. Retrieved from http://newspaperblackout.com /post/32613115299/a-newspaper-blackout-by-quinquangular-my-name-is**  
        This amateur blackout poem will be used to challenge students' preconceptions of poetry form, as it is a highly visual poem. As a one-line poem - "The Dream engine is a routine route for turbulence" - it will be incorporated into the lesson on Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech to get them thinking about why people - why African-Americans - would dream in spite of the hardships (i.e. arrests, assassination, etc) that come with such an action (i.e. dream of equality).

**Roundhouse London (2013a). Roundhouse poetry slam 2013: Runner up: Ben Norris [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\_embedded&v=gEMQCJ6\_FMI**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about the necessity the gravity, but in the metaphorical terms of life, not the literal scientific implication.

**Roundhouse London (2013b). Roundhouse poetry slam 2013: Winner: Antosh Wojick [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\_zXjfBPfTk**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about the desire to be invisible (and the believed safety in invisibility).

**Rutsala, V. (1994). Salt and pepper. In Barbara Drake (ed.), Writing poetry [2nd edition] (p. 7). Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace & Company.**  
        As an extension of the "Do Now" on poetry form, this poem, "Salt and Pepper," is a prose poem that resembles a paragraph more than typical stanza lines. After students brainstorm ideas about poetry characteristics on a semantic web, they will read this poem and compare/contrast its features to the ones brainstormed to decide whether or not it should be considered poetry. The prose form of this poem parallels the form of Dr. King's speech, so it preps students for consideration of whether a speech qualifies as poetry.

**Solt, M. E. (1994). Lilac. In Barbara Drake (ed.), Writing poetry [2nd edition] (p. 8). Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace & Company.**  
       Similar to Rutsala's "Salt and Pepper" poem, "Lilac" will be given to students at the same time that one is distributed. With its highly visual format, the poem challenges students' preconceptions of poetry form. Its visual nature parallels the blackout poem to be introduced later on in the lesson, so "Lilac" prepares students to consider the validity of blackout poetry as poetry. Its unconventional form and brevity allows it to be integrated as a quick follow-up to the "Do Now" on poetry characteristics that foreshadows the nontraditional poem forms to be discussed as the "meat" of the lesson: blackout poetry and "I Have a Dream" speech.

**SpeakEasyNYC (2011). Phil Kaye performs 'Repetition' [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EILQTDBqhPA**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about the power of words and language.

**SpeakEasyNYC (2012). Sarah Kay & Phil Kaye 'when love arrives’ [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdJ6aUB2K4g**  
    This video will be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem is about the many forms of love.

**TED (2011). Sarah Kay: If I should have a daughter... [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch/?v=0snNB1yS3IE**  
    This video will also be part of the computer lab day in which students choose two - from a list of twelve - slam poem performances to watch. This poem's theme, however, relates to the theme of Maya Angelou poem, "Still I Rise," that was looked at in a class lesson: persevere despite the obstacles and hardships. It describes the advice she would give her child if she got into trouble or experienced heartache.  
  
**Than, G. A. (2013, March 19). 108. SOPHIE SCHOLL: The fire within [Comic]. Retrieved from http://zenpencils.com/comic/108-sophie-scholl-the-fire-within/**  
        This "quote comic" by the blog Zen Pencils comes in as a more formal and complex Critical Lens practice than the various tweets have been. However, it allows student interpretation of the quote to be compared and contrasted to Than’s visual interpretation. Students will work in pairs and receive a section of the quote to draw. After drawing their own summary of their quote section, students will compare and contrast their work with the “professional” pictorial representation of it. Students will ultimately connect the Scholl's message - to take a stand and not sit passively - to the poem, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" in order to see how both can relate to why the African-American initiated their Civil Rights Movement. Students will also see the relevance of the quote to the historical movement by making connections to how the author of the quote was a nonviolent activist herself, just in Nazi Germany.

**Thomas, D. (1937). Do not go gentle into that good night. Retrieved from http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15377**  
        Dylan Thomas's poem will be used in a two-day lesson. Since it is a very dense and metaphoric passage, the first day will focus solely on "comprehension within text," which means breaking down the metaphors and getting the "gist" of the overall poem. The close reading will be whole-class, and students will have to summarize - with an annotation - after every stanza. The poem's message - an active, not passive approach to death - will be expanded the next day, so students can see it also as a commentary on how to live life in general: to seize moments and take action. And such is the mindset assumed by African-Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. That "beyond text" comprehension will be activated by reading a quote by Sophie Scholl and cross-comparing texts.

**Truss, D. (2013, December 7). When your tweet is too long [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/datruss/status/409385458141917184**  
        This tweet serves as a little bridge to history's Twitter feed to breed student familiarity with the social media site. David Truss offers advice on how to write a tweet, specifically when what one wants to say exceeds the 140 character limit. He offers 5 tips in this tweet, and visually represents each. For example, his advice to use numbers is written as "Switch 2 numbers" and his advice to eliminate spaces lacks a space. Therefore, it is a fun way to provide students some tips on writing their final project “Promotional Tweet” for their slam poem. The tweet will be shown to students when the final project is introduced to the class.

**Twitter (2013). Social studies fishbowl discussion twitter account. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/gainingequality**

As part of their ELA final project for this poetry unit, students have to summarize their original slam poems on modern-day racism in a “Promotional Tweet.” They will tweet it to their social studies Twitter account, and the teacher will retweet it. The character limit and the mandatory hashtag will teach students to summarize concisely. Students have been practicing with tweet summaries through the ELA unit. A model “Promotional Tweet” is available on the account’s main page. It is a “Promotional Tweet” for a slam poem analyzed in class (Javon Johnson’s “Cuz He’s Black”), so all students will be familiar with it.

**UrbanaPoetrySlam (2012). Mike Rosen 'When God Happens' [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2Ks06Al8c0**

On the day that immediately follows the computer-lab slam poetry exposure and begins the in-class work time for students to write their final project slam poems, Rosen’s “When God Happens” will serve as the “Do Now.” After students brainstorm what they know about the War on Terror and September 11, students will watch this video as another example – in addition to Johnson’s “Cuz He’s Black” – of a slam poem as political commentary. The slam poems for the computer-lab exposure day were all social commentaries – so that they would be accessible to students’ without activating any prior knowledge. By watching this political commentary slam poem and discussing it as a class before students break off into their writing groups, students will have another model of political slam poetry – and how it focuses on getting across a specific point through pathos just as much – if not more than – as factual information about the political event on which it is commenting.

**Wood, R. (1965). FREDEM. Retrieved from http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/pwood.htm**

Written during the African-American Civil Rights Movement, this is an example poem that showcases how individuals did use poetry as a means of civil disobedience and expression during that time period. Juxtaposed with three other poems from around that same time period, students will analyze this poem in order to understand how its use of allusion – to the voter literacy tests – helps it get its point across. Students will use their knowledge learned in the parallel social studies unit to help them decipher the allusion.

**WordsAloud2 (2009). Shane Koyczan, 'This is my voice,' Words Aloud 2007, Canada [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHczVzGfyqQ**    This video will also be part of the computer lab day in which students are exposed to a variety of slam poems. However, in addition to picking several from the list of twelve, students will be required to watch this performance. Therefore, in the class discussion afterwards, there will be a shared knowledge base to refer to and pull from. This poem was chosen as the required performance because of its message. It stresses the importance of everyone’s individual voice. That belief underlies why people write poetry as discussed throughout this unit: to be heard because they believe they have something worthwhile to say. It underlies why students have to write their own slam poems on a modern-day topic. The final project encourages them to see that they have something to say.