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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the whole language approach to teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the context of gender issues. More specifically, this study is focused on teaching ESL to university freshman in Taiwan. The whole language approach is used for two reasons: language can best be learned when it kept as a whole--especially with Taiwanese college freshman who have weak listening and speaking skills and little practice in writing; students learn to read best by engaging in reading full texts (of literature), rather than just completing worksheets. Gender issues are very salient in the Taiwanese context, because it is at the university level that students first come into regular contact in school with the opposite sex since they were young children, most having gone to single sex high schools. Also, because many women in Taiwan are highly educated, and less likely to be economically dependent on a husband, many are choosing not to marry or to divorce their husbands as a way of solving marital problems. The case for why whole language education is most effective is made, and how literature can be integrated into a whole language classroom is described in detail. The paper is divided into 7 sections titled: "Getting Started"; "Gender and Socialization"; "Gender and Fairy Tales"; "Gender and Communication"; "Gender and Media"; "Gender and Workplace"; "Celebration and Evaluation." Also included are annotated bibliographies of selected readings and reading to be considered, 29 references, and three appendices containing worksheets. (KFT)

Exploring Gender Issues across Cultures: A Literature Based Whole Language Approach

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August 22, 2000

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INTRODUCTION

Who are the target students?

This thematic unit is designed for university freshmen in Taiwan who are taking Freshman English (FE) classes. FE is required for all freshmen in all universities in Taiwan. Under Taiwan's educational system, freshmen must have taken English as a subject during their past six years of junior and senior high school and have taken the Joint College Entrance Examination (JCEE) before entering a university. Because the JCEE most of its emphasis on reading, little on writing, and none on speaking and listening, most students' reading and writing skills are at advanced and low intermediate levels respectively. However, because speaking and listening skills are not addressed in the JCEE, students' speaking and listening skills are only at a novice level.

For a number of reasons, I have chosen the topic "Exploring Gender Issues across Cultures: A whole language approach" for my thematic unit.

Why a literature based whole language approach?

The whole language approach is well-suited to the unit for two reasons. First, the philosophy of whole language is that a language can best be learned when it is kept as a whole (Goodman, 1986; Freeman & Freeman, 1992). Since freshmen have weak listening and speaking skills and little practice in writing, they can benefit from the whole language approach, which provides students with

a learning environment in which the four skills are integrated. Students listen, speak, read and write about selections from literary works and about planned activities both inside and outside the classroom. They can do this individually, by sharing in a group, by having discussions with people outside the classroom, or by working with group members or in cooperation with the whole class.

Second, whole language is grounded in the basic belief that children learn to read by actually engaging in reading full texts, rather than work-sheets. The language of literature becomes the heart of a whole language program. Thus, “whole language and literature are inseparable” (Cullinan, 1995, p. 129). Since the primary goal of our course is teaching culture through “literature”¹, I believe this approach is very appropriate. The rich resource embedded in literature suggests that introducing literature is a good avenue for teaching language and culture in context. Exploration of a literary text encourages talking and active problem solving, generates purposeful, referential questions and provides the basis for highly motivated small-group work (Gajdusek, 1988).

Why across cultures?

“Culture is shaped by society and tradition as well as by individual teachers and the learners who come to their classroom.” (Kutz & Roskelly, 1991, p. 15). In this unit, the term “cultures” has two different meanings. It can refer to cultures

¹ For the purposes of this paper, “literature” refers to a broader definition than in everyday discourse. See “What kinds of literature are used” on p. 14 for further discussion.

other than the culture of Taiwan. It can also refer to the cultures of previous generations, such as the cultures of one's grandparents and parents.

In Taiwan, there are many foreign language departments besides the English department in most universities. Most universities have French, German, Spanish, and Japanese departments. Some universities even have Korean and Russian departments. Most professors in these departments are native speakers and are the best resources for students to learn from people with different cultures. As our world is becoming a global village, it is essential for us, as language teachers, to prepare students to face this changing world and to communicate with people from other cultures.

I believe that understanding our own culture is the first step in beginning to understand other cultures. However, focusing on understanding ourselves in our generation is not enough. Only when we have a better sense about where we are from will we know where we are going. Therefore, communicating with people from other generations and understanding their perspectives toward certain issues helps us understand our own point of view much more clearly.

Why gender issues?

In order to prepare students to pass the JCEE, several approaches are used. One of them is to keep students' lives simple. For example, most students attend single-sex high schools. The idea is that keeping students away from the opposite sex can prevent them from being distracted by relationships and they can better

concentrate on their studies. The school, family, and society all advise (and sometimes even warn) students: “Don’t have any contact with the opposite sex until you go to college, because the most important thing for a high school student is to do nothing but study.” This idea is not only supported by the school, the family and society, but is also believed and practiced by most high school students in Taiwan. As a matter of fact, the best male and female senior high schools are single-sex. This implies that most college students come from a single-sex high school.

As a result, when these high school students reach college, for many of them it is the beginning of journey to learn more about the opposite sex. Therefore, this could not be an easy task for them. Most freshmen may not know *what* to talk about with the opposite sex at the beginning. Once they have romantic feelings for someone, some (whether male or female) may be too shy to express themselves; others may not know how to behave in front of the opposite sex. As a former college student in Taiwan, I often felt that the two different sexes lived in two different worlds. There was another culture, which we, as females, had to adjust to. Male students presumably felt the same way. This gap is very apparent between students who major in science and those who major in humanities because in Taiwan most female students are in humanities departments and most male students are in science departments. Whenever a miscommunication occurs between different sexes, students in the sciences tend to

be accused by students in the humanities of lacking the artistic qualities necessary to really understand them. By the same token, there is a tendency for students in the sciences to complain that students in the humanities lack “brains”, because they do not think scientifically and they cannot communicate with science majors. Apparently, the influence of field differences is one of the factors leading to the miscommunication, but students seem unaware that there are some other differences that need to be taken into consideration. One of these is the socialization of gender roles.

“ If it were customary to send young girls to school and then to let them, exactly like boys, learn the sciences, they would learn them just as well as the boys and would comprehend the subtlest details of all the arts and sciences as effortlessly as the boys do. Moreover, such women exist. As I explained to you above, the situation is as follows: the more women are inferior to men in terms of physical strength, the weaker and less skillful they are in certain areas, the more intelligent and sagacious they become in the areas where they really set to work with a will.” (Lehnert, 1992, p. 110. reported from Christine de Pisan, 1986).

Gender roles are socially defined. Both males and females are perceived by society to be a male or a female as opposed to a human being from the day they are born. Consequently, they are expected to behave differently. Gender roles give both males and females possibilities to be what they should be, but also constrain other possibilities because people’s gender stereotyping often limits other possibilities. Instead of assuming this is the way it should be, students can become

more aware of gender differences, possibilities and constraints by exploring gender issues.

What are the goals of instruction?

The goals of this unit are many-faceted and include exploring gender issues, developing cultural understanding, and increasing English proficiency. To explore gender issues, it helps students (1) to be aware of gender difference, lower their anxiety with the opposite sex and understand how to treat the other sex as they want to be treated and how to tackle problems when miscommunication occurs; (2) to realize how gender roles are socially constructed; (3) to understand how people's lives have been affected by gender roles; (4) to elicit their feelings about their gender roles have been constructed in society; (5) to challenge their unexamined assumptions about gender roles; (6) to keep exploring these issues during college and throughout the rest of their lives.

To develop cultural understanding, this unit attempts to (1) help students view gender issues as an important part of every culture; (2) provide students with an experience exploring gender issues, so as to help them better understand their own culture and others as well; (3) make students realize that there are many resources they can use to enhance their cultural understanding besides the teacher and books. These include professors in other departments, foreigners on campus, older family members and even their own peers.

To increase English proficiency, students will be provided with a new English learning experience. They will be exposed to a rich language learning environment in which they will (1) read a wide range of selections of literary works and choose what they want to read; (2) engage in a variety of activities so as to use language in a functional, meaningful and purposeful way; (3) not only practice their four skills of language arts, but also enhance their higher order thinking, such as comparing, contrasting, analyzing and synthesizing; (4) understand that learning English is not for taking tests but for communicating.

PREFACE

Dear teachers,

It is essential for you to read this preface.

Why are gender issues worth exploring?

According to the survey from the Ministry of Interior (retrieved on July 17 from <http://www.taipei.org/teco/cicc/news/english/e-11-29-99/e-11-29-99-5.htm>) Taiwan has the highest divorce rate among the Asian countries. The information released from the Ministry of Interior also indicated that Taiwan is now experiencing the highest rate of divorce ever (Yam News, July 3, 1999 from <http://news.yam.com.tw/life/200007/03/18386700.html>). This phenomenon may result the fact that more and more women receive higher education in Taiwan. Unlike the traditional agricultural society where it relied mainly on human power and men were privileged, women with higher education believe they can be as competitive as men in this industrial and technology-based Taiwanese society. They feel they do not have to rely on men or husbands in order to “survive”. Once they encounter problems in their marriage, many women choose to get divorced to deal with the problems without being afraid of being dependent from their husbands. As a result of change of the societal structure, it appears that the relationship between the two genders is facing challenges.

Thoughts, the most essential part of culture, determine actions (divorce).

Nevertheless, language is an indispensable tool for mediating thought and culture.

We as language teachers play a role in relation to thought, culture and language. Taiwan's educational system prevents students from dealing with gender issues until they go to college. Freshmen English classes may be a good place for them to begin inquiry into gender issues because they want to learn more and they need to know more about them. If we believe the classroom is a miniature of our society, then gender is a powerful factor in our English classrooms. "The English curriculum needs a close look in the light of gender sensitivity if all our students, males and females, are to fully develop the potential to hear the voices of others clearly, and use their own voices to understand, shape, and share their worlds, and imagine other worlds." (Appleby & McCracken, 1992, p. 6). I believe topic of this unit--exploring gender issues across cultures-- will be a meaningful step to take to address our concerns.

What is included in the unit?

This unit is divided into seven sections. Each one of them addresses important issues about gender roles. Section 1, "Getting Started," tells you how you should prepare yourself and your students before you get into the remaining sections. Section 2, "Gender and Socialization," intends to make students understand the roles of family and school in the socialization of gender roles -- in other words, how family and school make males become "male" and females become "female". Section 3, "Gender and Fairy Tales," provides students with an opportunity to examine how gender roles have been portrayed in fairy tales and

what the portraits mean to them as a male or a female. Section 4, “Gender and Communication,” attempts to examine the discourse of males and females and use the insights developed to understand what different conversation styles mean to the two genders, and how these different discourses affect their interactions. Section 5, “Gender and Media,” gives students an overview about how everyday media, such as TV, magazines, and commercials, represents gender roles. Students will be asked what the relationship is between the media and the audience, what the representation means to them, and how they feel and think about the representation. Section 6, “Gender and Workplace,” helps students become more aware of how they perceive the relationship between jobs and genders, and to realize how their perceptions are influenced by the gender roles. The purpose of the last section, “Celebration and Evaluation,” offers a platform-like experience for students to demonstrate how much they have learned from this unit and to evaluate how dynamically students have been concerned with all the issues raised by this unit. This section may also help students figure out the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning throughout the whole unit and help you decide what kinds of adjustments and modifications you need to go to the next unit.

How is a whole language classroom structured?

Since this is a whole language approach classroom, the structure and many strategies used in this unit are grounded on the following beliefs and principles as

opposed to the traditional ones (Appleby & McCracken, 1992; Goodman, 1986; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Kulz & Roskelly, 1991).

First, **the four skills of language arts should be integrated.** Classroom activities--writing , reading, speaking, listening--are reenvisioned. Students learn to write as a reader and learn to read as a writer. In addition, both students and teachers will engage in real inquiry, real discovery, and real negotiation.

Second, **students are the center of learning.** Teachers and students need to reexamine their relationship in the classroom by redefining authority and control for themselves. Students need to take authority for learning in activities designed to ensure responsibility and action in the classroom. Teachers need to “reshape” their authority by recognizing the way it can be shared as well as balanced. So, while helping students become active learners and assume authority for their own learning, teachers must also create opportunities for them to share in knowing and coming to know. The curriculum needs to foster shared control over tasks, over interpretations, and over evaluation.

Third, **language learning is a socially constructed process.** The relationship of the classroom to the outside world needs to change. Teachers and students bring lots of “outside” knowledge to the classroom, and the classroom needs to be a place where such knowledge is valued, and where it is connected to the learning that goes on within the classroom. The individual who negotiates between what he knows already and what other members of a group share with

him creates dynamic knowledge. Teachers establish activities that actively engage students as individuals in their learning because language is fundamentally shared and social, and is fully created and negotiated in collaborative contexts.

How can literature be used effectively in the classroom?

Except for the first and last sections, section 2-6 are formatted according to the “into-through-beyond ” model (McCloskey & Stack, 1993) which includes activities for use before, during, and after reading the literary work. At the end of each section, follow-up activities are included.

Before Reading: Connections to students’ background and their own experience about the literary work guide them “into” gender issues.

During Reading: A variety of activities and strategies are provided to guide students’ understanding “through” the work and facilitate their understanding of gender issues.

After Reading: This part intends to take students “beyond” the work into higher order thinking. They can express, compare, contrast, argue, criticize, analyze or synthesize what they have learned from the previous two parts.

Follow-up Activities: This is a very important part of each section because it helps students link the sub-theme to the main theme and relate what they have learned to their personal life experience and to their community. Students take what they have learned in each section out to their community and search for

related information from their community to bring back into the classroom to enrich their understanding of the issues discussed in class.

What teaching strategies are applied?

Offering choice. Since this is a learner-centered classroom, in this unit students are asked to choose and bring various materials into the class. Choice provides students with a sense of ownership. This sense of ownership is the first step for students to take the responsibility for their own learning.

Free-writing. Students are asked to do a lot of free-writing in this unit, particularly in the **Before Reading** section. Unlike the question-response format in a traditional classroom, where students play a passive role in answering questions, the purpose of the free-writing is to encourage students to take an active role and relate *any* aspect of their life experience to a certain issue so that they can use their imagination and draw on their background as much as possible.

Group work. Groups are also important because of the ways in which they affect the dynamics of the class as a whole. The advantage of small-group interactions is that it establishes the bridge between individuals and communities. The group is used in many ways in this unit for writing and responding, discussing, questioning, problem solving, researching, and reporting. Such groups encourage learners to take active roles and to assume new responsibilities.

Role play. Role play is used to make students aware of gender issues on a daily basis. They notice, observe and interpret their understanding from their point of view.

Interview. In the follow-up activities, students are asked to synthesize their understanding of what they have learned from the previous parts of the section and expand their understanding by doing interviews with people-- “culture partners” -- from other cultures and with family members-- “elder generations” --from their home or community.

Reflective paper. At the end of each section, students will be asked to write a 2-page reflective paper. Its purpose is to give students an opportunity to integrate what they have learned from the whole section. As a result, students not only reflect on what they know, but also on *how* they have come to know it through the whole process.

What kinds of literature are used?

It is my belief that to deepen students’ language sensitivity and to enrich cultural awareness, students need to be exposed to as many genres of literature as possible because each of them reflects a different part of language and culture. Consequently, I have used a broad definition of literature to select the texts for this unit. Literature is a piece of written work which can provoke students’ thinking and enhance students’ understanding in terms of gender issues; thus a wide range

of literary works are included, such as poems, fairy tales, essays, stories, magazines, commercial ads, and transcriptions of interviews, etc.

How are readings selected?

In making selections, I was also guided by the following concerns:

Thematic relevance. The selections of readings are chosen to illustrate the gender issues in relation to each sub-theme of the five sections.

Cultural familiarity. The cultural elements of the readings are very familiar to students so that they have no difficulties bringing in their own cultural background and making sense out of it.

Linguistic accessibility. To facilitate students' speaking and writing abilities, the language of the literature is simple and clear enough for students to understand, so that students will not feel hesitant to express themselves in oral and written forms.

Length of readings. I selected readings of reasonable length (dependent on the type of literature) which could be covered as quickly as possible for a number of reasons. First, students are assigned a textbook in their FE classes and the teacher must cover certain materials from this textbook according to the syllabus distributed by the English Committee. Thus, this unit can only be used as a supplement. Second, I suspect that if a long reading is selected, students will feel too much psychological pressure whether or not they are asked to cover every part of the reading. Some students may even lose interest. Third, the unit is designed

to incorporate many activities. If long readings are selected, it will probably not be possible to cover all the sections.

Student choice: Quite a few selections will be chosen by the students according to their needs and interests in terms of the sub-theme of each section.

What are my suggestions?

In order to apply this thematic unit effectively and efficiently to your FE classes, I have some suggestions for you.

First, **be flexible**. Flexibility is the key word for applying this unit to your class successfully. Find ways to suit the interests and needs of individual classrooms and learners. Both you and your students can mold the unit into the way you want it to be. You can change the order of the sections, skipping some of them or adding to them depending how well the class goes as far as the goals of the class are concerned. If you find the literature is too difficult or too easy for your students, you substitute other materials for them or ask students to bring in what they need. Furthermore, the class work can also be tailored to how much time you intend to spend on each section and how much time your students need for every activity them in each section. If time is a factor, you need not cover every activity in every section. Ask your students to choose one or two of the **Follow-up Activities**. In sum, instead of rigidly following each step planned in each section, this unit intends to inspire you to create your own.

Second, **be a model for your students.** You, as a teacher, are the best model of cooperative learning and can make a big difference in interactive learning atmosphere. Although students should take responsibility for their own learning, if you can view yourself as one of their partners and share and discuss what you feel and think with them, you are not only observing what students are doing, but also engaging directly in their learning. In this brand new learning climate, students need modeling to envision what they are supposed to do.

Third, **focus on the content in your evaluation.** You may feel you do not have enough time to deal with students' free-writing and reflective papers. My suggestion for reading the written production is to focus first on the meaning (content) rather than on the form (grammatical accuracy). This does not mean that accuracy is not important. You may identify the errors that most students have made in their reflective papers and give them strategic instruction about them before you begin the next section.

Fourth, **be a resourceful teacher.** Teacher Chang, although published only in Chinese, is a very well-known monthly magazine in Taiwan in which gender issues are often addressed in depth, especially for college students. More information about this magazine can be found from this web site <http://www2.nsysu.edu.tw/t-chang/>. Student Post (for more information: <http://www.studentpost.com.tw/>) and Taiwan News are two newspapers published in English in Taiwan. They feature columns written by college students describing

various problems and concerns in their lives, particularly relationships with the other gender. These are all very good resources for finding teaching materials to address gender issues, even better-suited than those I have chosen in this unit, because they share the same academic and socio-cultural background as your students. In addition, below are some relevant web sites you might also want to consider including in your unit.

An Introduction to the "Gender Roles" Question

http://online.cbccts.sk.ca/alliancestudies/docs/Radant_Gender.html

Fact Sheets on Gender Issues

<http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/facts.html>

Teen Shooting Sprees: A Gender Issue?

<http://www.rightgrrl.com/1999/shootings.html>

Technology - a Gender Issue

<http://www.unep.or.jp/ietc/Publications/INSIGHT/Dec-97/10.html>

Elections and the Gender Issue

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~ldelornz/women.html>

What outcomes are you to expect?

Students should be able to (1) read **multiple genres** of literature (using a broad definition of literature); (2) use **multiple modes** (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to express themselves; (3) view gender issues from **multiple perspectives** (across cultures and generations); and (4) present their understanding of the unit by **multiple representational codes**, such as opera, songs, role play, music, drawing, speech, etc.

On the one hand, I understand how pressured and demanding this will be for you because of the topic addressed, the people covered and the approach used in this unit. On the other hand, I am confident you will gain a lot of pleasure from the progress your students make as well as obtaining the teaching experience in a whole language classroom by putting this unit into practice with your students. Enjoy your teaching! I am looking forward to sharing your teaching experience. If you have any comments or questions, please welcome to contact me at ylo@indiana.edu

Best regards,

Yi-Hsuan Gloria Lo

Section 1

GETTING STARTED

Children learn what they live.

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn. If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight. If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy. If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty. If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient. If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident. If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate. If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice. If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith. If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself. If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world (Dorothy, 1972).

To the teacher:

This is one suggestion of a good way for you to prepare your students. Ask your them to write down questions they would like to ask members of the opposite sex and state why they are interested in asking the questions. Depending on the size of the class, have students form groups up to four to share their responses.

I am sure that after the discussion students will find out there are many similarities as well as differences in their questions and reasons. You may further ask your students to tell you why they think gender issues are worth exploring. You can also share with them your rationale for addressing this topic-- "Exploring gender issues across-culture: A whole language approach." Since everything, including the topic, teaching approach, and strategies in the unit will be very new to students, you may take this opportunity to explain to them how you will address the issues in the FE classes.

Before you begin the first lesson, be sure to ask your students to form groups according to their interest in other cultures. To decide the number of groups to be used in this unit, it would be helpful to find out how many foreign language departments there are in your university and how many native speakers can be found in those departments. In addition, the Language Centers either on campus or off campus are another good places for your students to find some people from other cultures. Some students may have known people from other cultures. Each group should find two "culture partners" (one male and one female,

if possible) from their target culture. Each member of a group will have to take turns to do interviews with them concerning the issues they discuss in class.

Second, ask students to invite their “elder generations,” such as their parents, grandparents or elder family members, to get involved in this unit. As a teacher, you may write a letter to the family to invite their participation and to state why you hope they can join students’ learning in this unit and how they can incorporate their ideas with what the students are learning.

Please remember--the more people that are engaged in this unit, the more both you and students can benefit from their contribution. Before you go any further, please make sure your students have no problem finding their “culture partners” or asking their “elder generations” to get involved.

I hope you will have a wonderful experience working with your students and people from various cultures as well as members of different communities.

To the students:

Before you really engage in exploring gender issues, you are encouraged to do a number of things. First, please think seriously about what questions you would like to ask the opposite sex and why you think you are interested in asking such questions. Please note this step is very important for you to understand gender issues in the following sections of the unit.

Second, think about one culture (e.g. American culture, Japanese culture, etc.) or culture point (e.g. expressing refusals or accepting invitations) you are interested in learning more about. You may think about some of the foreigners you meet on campus that you have not had any opportunity to talk with. This will be a great opportunity for you to invite them to be interviewed. Some of you may also provide your peers with some information if you know people from other cultures off campus.

Third, link your learning at school with your family members. You may wonder why your learning about gender issues has anything to do with the “elder generations”. As a matter of fact, they will give you different perspectives to enhance your understanding of gender issues.

Fourth, I would like you to prepare a folder for this unit so that you can keep everything from the beginning till the end. This folder can be used as a way to trace how much progress you have made through the whole process. Please keep every written work in your folder. You will need it at the end of this unit.

Fifth, compared to your learning experience in the past twelve years, this teaching and learning approach will be a very big challenge for you. Please stop viewing your teacher as the only source of knowledge and the authority figure who will provide the “right” answer. By contrast, from now on you should take responsibility for your own learning. Your peers, your elder members, your friends from other cultures, and your surroundings are all sources of knowledge.

Lastly, you might at first feel a little bit uncomfortable with this new way of learning, please remember it is quite OK for you to experience the uneasiness because it takes some time to get used to a different way of learning. Talk to you teacher if you have any concerns and questions.

I hope you enjoy participating in this unit and learning from each other.

Section 2

GENDER AND SOCIALIZATION

Long before entering college the woman student has experienced her alien identity in a world which misnames her, turns her to its own uses, denying her the resources she needs to become self-affirming, self-defined. The nuclear family teaches her that relationships are more important than selfhood or work; that “whether the phone rings for your, and how often, “having the right clothes, doing the dishes, take precedence over study or solitude; that too much intelligence or intensity may make her unmarriageable; that marriage and children--service to others--are, finally, the points on which her life will be judged a success or a failure (Rich, 1991, p. 333) .

Objectives:

1. To make students more aware of their own role in terms of gender differences.
2. To show students how gender stereotyping is constructed in terms of parents' expectations and schools' education.

Reading: "Suicide Note." (Mirikitani, 1990).

Before Reading:

1. Ask students to free write about whether or not they have ever thought about committing suicide (or heard about someone committing suicide) and why.
2. Share and compare male and female students' reasons for wanting to commit suicide.

During Reading:

1. Ask students to fill in the blanks of the text (See Appendix A).
2. Ask students to guess the gender of the author of this poem and their reasons for guessing so.

3. Ask students to share with the whole class their groups' understanding of the text.
4. Have students read the original text, write a summary of what the poem is about, and share their interpretations with peers in their group.

After Reading:

1. Have students free-write regarding the following questions:
 - a. How are gender roles portrayed in the poem as a father, a mother, a son and a daughter?
 - b. How is this portrait related to your life experience as a son or daughter at home and as a student at school?
 - c. How does suicide relate to gender issues in this poem?
2. Let students share their free-writing in a small group.
3. The whole class discusses the issues raised from the group sharing.

Follow-up Activities:

1. Have each group prepare a role-play in which male and female roles are reversed. Students can examine what behaviors are perceived as males' and what are females'.

2. Have students interview their “culture partners” and “elder generations” to talk about what they would like to be in various areas of their lives at various ages. Students will then compare their answers and their interviewees’ and share their findings with the class.
3. Each student will write a 2-page reflective paper about what they have learned in this lesson, including **Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading** and **Follow-up Activities**.

Section 3

GENDER AND FAIRY TALES

It is reasonable to expect that since folk and fairy tales rely so strongly on patterns and traditions they reflect a heavily gender role stereotyped format. Most of them do. The hero is often strong, brave, active, highly extroverted, nonintellectual, and willing to take great physical risks. He usually initiates action and controls the situation. Conversely the typical female protagonist is weak, demure, passive, in need of rescuing, never scholarly, and, above all, obedience. She is seldom in control of her own destiny. Her greatest reward is to become the bride of her prince-rescuer and serve him happily ever after. Sometimes females such as servants, witches, fairy godmothers, and wicked stepsister, who are not constrained by the burden of being protagonists, can be powerful and intelligent--even ugly, strong, and disobedient (Rudman, p. 183).

Objectives:

1. To have students to think about how gender roles are represented in fairy tales.
2. To elicit students' feelings about the representation of gender roles in fairy tales.
3. To determine how gender roles can be reconstructed if they are given an opportunity to do so.

Reading: "Cinderella." (Harbour, 1993).

Before Reading:

1. Ask students to bring in their favorite fairy tale.
2. Have them free-write for two minutes to state why they like it most.
3. Have students share their free-writing in a group and discuss:
 - a. Who are the main characters of the story?
 - b. What are their physical features?
 - c. How does the story begin and end?
 - d. What other elements are involved in the story?
 - e. Are there any similarities in terms of the previous questions?
 - f. What kinds of fairy tales do male and female students like most?

During Reading:

1. Have students role-play “Cinderella” (Harbour, 1993) in their group by bringing different characters to life through their voices.
2. Choose some groups to demonstrate in front of the class.

After Reading:

1. Ask students to free-write about how gender roles are portrayed in the text.
2. Ask groups to discuss and compare the reading with their favorite fairy tales and examine how “Cinderella” is the same as/different from the characterization in their favorite fairy tales in terms of gender roles.
3. Have students share their opinions and feelings about the gender stereotyping in the fairy tales.
 - a. Why do you think in most fairy tales women and men are portrayed in a certain way?
 - b. Do you like the representation of gender roles in fairy tales? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities:

1. Ask students to rewrite the ending for “Cinderella” so that the gender roles in the story are not stereotyped.
2. Have students interview their “culture partners” and “elder generations” about what their favorite fairy tales are and why. Ask them to compare the males’ and females’ responses and to examine whether or not there is a gender stereotyping in fairy tales across cultures.
3. Suggest students view the film “Even After” to see Cinderella portrayed through the eyes of a modern woman.
4. Ask students to write a 2-page reflective paper about what they have learned in **Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading, and Follow-up Activities.**

Section 4

GENDER AND COMMUNICATION

When the Martians [men] and Venusians [women] first got together, they encountered many of the problems with relationships we have today. Because they recognized that they were different, they were able to solve these problems. One of the secrets of their success was *good communication*.

You see *the Martian and Venusian languages had the same words, but they way they were used give different meanings*. Their expressions were similar, but they had different connotations or emotional emphasis. Misinterpreting each other was very easy. So when communication problems emerged, they assumed it was just one of those expected misunderstandings and that with a little assistance they would surely understand each other. They experienced a trust and acceptance that we rarely experience today (Gary, 1995, p. 59-60).

.....

Objectives:

1. To promote students' awareness of gender differences in terms of communication.
2. Have students recognize the potential factors leading to miscommunication between genders.

Reading: "Speaking Different Languages" (Gray, 1992).

Before Reading:

1. Have students write down their answers of the following questions:
 - a. Who are your best friends?
 - b. What topics do you usually talk about with your best friends?
 - c. How often and for how long do you talk to your best friends?
 - d. How do you like to talk to your best friends?
 - e. Where do you usually talk with your best friends?
 - f. What do you usually do with your best friends?
2. Have students share their answers in small groups and discuss the differences as well as similarities between male and female students' responses.
3. Ask students to discuss the possible factors leading to the differences.

During Reading:

1. Ask students to read the text and state their reasons why males and females respond differently.
2. Have students identify the responses that represent their experience with the opposite sex when miscommunication occurs.

After Reading:

1. Ask students to respond the following questions individually.
 - a. How do you feel when you are reading the text?
 - b. What would you respond to people of the opposite sex's talks?
 - c. Do you think you would talk and respond very similarly to the way females or males talk in the reading?
 - d. Imagine you were one of the people in the conversation. How would you feel if a member of the opposite sex spoke to you in the way presented in the reading? Would you feel the same way the people in the conversation felt?
2. Have students share their responses in groups.

Follow-up Activities:

1. Ask students to write less than one-page paper describing a story their real life experience (or others' life stories) in which a conversation with the opposite sex is misunderstood².
2. Have your students read one of the conversations in the reading to their "culture partners" and ask their partners whether or not they have had a similar experience with the opposite sex . Have them also ask what they think what might be the factors leading to the differences.
3. Ask your students to observe their "elder generations" in the community and examine how communication takes place and how different genders convey their meaning.
4. Ask students to write a 2-page reflective paper about what they have learned in **Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading** and **Follow-up Activities**.

² To give your students a better sense about how men and women talk and respond differently. Tannen's book (1990) is an excellent source for you to refer to.

Section 5

GENDER AND MEDIA

In general, media continue to present both women and men in stereotyped ways that limit our perceptions of human possibilities. Typically men are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive, and largely uninvolved in human relationships. Just as consistent with cultural views of gender are depiction of women as sex objects who are usually young, thin, beautiful, passive, dependent, and often incompetent and dumb. Female characters devote their primary energies to improving their appearances and taking care of homes and people. Because media pervade our lives, the ways they misrepresent gender may distort how we see ourselves and what we perceive as normal and desirable for men and women (Wood, 1994, p. 235).

Objectives:

1. To make students aware of how gender roles are portrayed in the media.
2. To elicit students' feelings and opinions about the representation of gender in the media.
3. To counteract the common misconception among students that gender roles are all equalized now through class activities.

Reading: "The 25 Most Intriguing People of 1999." (People Weekly, December 31, 1999).

Before Reading:

Bring the magazine to your classroom³. Show students pictures of people in the magazine and ask them to write their opinions on the following questions:

- a. How do you feel when you are observing the pictures?
- b. How do the body images of the men and women in the pictures appear to you?
- c. In your opinion, what are the messages the media is trying to convey to the readers?

- d. In your opinion, in what way will these pictures influence the readers?

During Reading:

Give each group one picture with the text from the magazine. While they are reading, ask them to find out:

- a. Who is in the picture?
- b. What is the story about?
- c. How does the media present the person in the picture in terms of picture and language?
- d. In your opinion, what makes this person famous or popular?
- e. Why do you think people are interested in learning more about this person?
- f. Do you like this person? Why or why not?
- g. Do you think you are affected by the media? If so, in what way?

After Reading:

1. Have students share their findings with the whole class.
2. Draw conclusions of what makes people famous, what devices are used in the media to present these famous people, why people are

³ If you can not locate the edition of 1999, you may want to consider magazines published in other years or

interested in learning more about these famous people, and how people are influenced by these famous people in the media in their lives.

Follow-up Activities:

1. Ask each group to take a story or advertisement from a newspaper or magazine, and reverse the genders. In other words, every time it says “he,” change it to “she;” every time it says “Mary,” change it to “Bob,” and so on. Later, in class, they can read the original and changed versions and discuss the nonconscious ideologies that normally go unnoticed but become evident when the genders are reversed. This can also be done well with photographs from ads, reversing the positions of men and women to highlight how we are used to seeing the man’s head higher than the woman’s (Hyde, 1996).
2. Have students interview their “culture partners” about who the popular men and women in the media of their cultures are. (If possible, ask your culture partners to show you their pictures). Ask them why they became popular. Have them tell you how influential

even magazines published in Taiwan, in which popular stars are presented.

these people are and to what age of people. Ask your “culture partners” how they feel about the way the media portrays gender.

3. Have students show the pictures used in the class to their “elder generation”. Ask them what they think about the current representation of genders in media and how it is different from what they had before.
4. Ask students to write a 2-page reflective paper about what they have learned in **Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading** and **Follow-up Activities**.

Section 6

GENDER AND WORKPLACE

Sex is perhaps the most important of personal characteristics. Even though sex may have nothing to do with the job or task at hand, it is far from irrelevant to the workplace (Lewen, 1988, p. 51, adapted from Kathryn Stechert, On Your Own Terms).

Objectives:

1. To examine students' assumptions about what workplace is suitable for which gender.
2. To identify some of the factors that lead to the inequalities in the workplace, if any.
3. To elicit students' feelings and opinions about the issue of gender and the workplace.

Reading: "Train Engineer" & "Airline Pilot" (Olesky, 1980).

Before Reading:

1. Show students the pictures of a woman as a train engineer and a woman as an airline pilot⁴ (e.g., Olesky, 1980) and ask the students to write down:
 - a. What is your first impression when you see the pictures of the texts in which women work as a train engineer and as an airline pilot?
 - b. When you see the pictures, what do you expect to read in the texts? Why?
2. Ask students to share their answers with the class.

⁴ For more pictures and information about women's occupations, please see Kunstadter, 1994.

During Reading:

1. Please free-write what you think and feel when you are reading the texts (Olesky, 1980) and mark down some parts of the texts that you would like to share with your group members.
2. Have your students think about the questions:
 - a. As a man, what would you feel if you had a girlfriend who was a train engineer or an airline pilot? Why do you feel this way?
 - b. As a woman, what do you think of women who are train engineers or airline pilots?

After Reading:

1. Ask students to draw up a list of occupations they believe are primarily the responsibility of men and a similar list of occupations for women. Rank them by prestige, salary level and interest (Rudman, 1995).
2. Have students mark which jobs they feel are available to them.
3. Compare the gender of the students with the choice of jobs and discuss the results with the students.

Follow-up activities:

1. Ask half of the groups to prepare a role play in which a male is rejected (for whatever reason) and the other half of the class to prepare a role play in which a female is rejected (for whatever reason). Students have to think about the reason for rejection in the role play. After the role plays, ask students to compare the reasons for rejecting males and females. Have them explain why.
2. Have students ask their “culture partners” to work with them using Appendix B, “Motivation/Satisfier” (adapted from Lauffer, 1985, p. 18-19) and compare your male and female culture partners’ answers. Share the result with the class and identify which males’ and females’ concerns are cross-cultural.
3. Have students work with their “elder generations”. Have your students ask their elder family members to fill in the blanks in Appendix C, “Personal Motivator-Satisfier Assessment” (Adapted from Lauffer, 1985, p. 33) to elicit what they are looking for in a job, what their current job has to offer and what adjustments are needed. Students will compare the reasons of males and females of the elder generation and also compare their response to those of their own generation.

4. Ask students to write a 2-page reflective paper about what they have learned in **Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading** and **Follow-up Activities**.

Section 7

CELEBRATION AND EVALUATION

The process of evaluation is essentially the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually realized by the program of curriculum and instruction. However, since educational objectives are essentially changes in human beings, that is, the objectives aimed at are to produce certain desirable changes in the behavior patterns of the student, then evaluation is the process for determining the degree to which these changes in behavior are actually taking place (Tyler, 1949, p. 105-6).

Congratulations! When you have reached this page, both you and your students are about to experience an important moment.

In the traditional classroom, a standardized test is often given to elicit students' "right" answers. In this whole language approach classroom, both you and your students will celebrate teaching and learning in two ways. One is performance. The other is publishing. You can use both performance and publishing as ways to evaluate students. A reflective paper and comments from your students on the activities they have engaged in in this classroom are helpful for their learning and your teaching.

Celebration:

1. Ask students to use any representational codes to present what they have learned from this unit, such as speech, presentation, demonstration, drama, dance, music, drawing and role-play, etc. at the end of the class. You may encourage students to bring either a camera or a video camera so that all the performances can become students' unforgettable memories. You may also use the photos and videos as teaching materials for teaching the next class.

2. Have students read their reflective papers throughout the whole unit and ask them to choose their best piece of writing. The teacher compiles each piece (including the teacher's) and publishes them on the bulletin board or on the web. Students can share their publications with peers in the same or different classes.

Evaluation:

1. Have students write a 5-page essay to illustrate what they have learned throughout the unit.
2. Have students comment on the following activities done in class.
 - a. Free-writing
 - b. Group sharing
 - c. Class discussion
 - e. Follow-up activities in class
 - f. Interviews with culture partners
 - g. Interviews with elder generations
 - h. Reflective paper
 - i. Publishing of your reflective paper
 - j. Activities of celebration
 - k. Readings

Annotated Bibliography of Selected Readings

Gray, J. (1995). Men are from Mars, women are from Venus: A practical guide for improving communication and getting what you want in your relationships. New York, NY: Harper Collions Publishers.

This is a manual for loving relationships in the 1990s. It reveals how men and women differ in all areas of their lives. Not only do men and women communicate differently but they think, feel, perceive, react, respond, love, need, and appreciate differently. Practical techniques for solving the problems that arise from differences between men and women are provided.

Harbour, J. (1993). Cinderella. (Illus.) My book of favorite fairy tales (pp. 23-32). NY: Derrydale Books.

In this collection of fairy tales, some of the stories may already be among your students' favorites, such as "Little Red Riding Hood," "Sleeping Beauty," "Hansel and Gretel," and "Snow White." You may select some stories which your students may make the acquaintance of for the first time, such as "Princess Goldenhair," "Snow White and Rose Red" and "White Cat."

Mirikitani, J. (1990). Suicide note. In G. Anzaldua, (Ed.), Making face, making soul : Creative and critical perspectives by women of color (pp. 75-76). San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books.

This edited volume is an essential resource for people who want to learn more about minority women in the United States in a thorough, personal, direct, empirical and theoretical way. It organized along six major sections: (1) rage in the face of racism; (2) denial and betrayal; (3) horror; (4) silence; (5) political arts and subversive acts (6) alliance and solidarity.

Oleksy, W. (1980). It's women's work, too. NY: Julian Messner.

Written for high school students of the United States just beginning to prepare for a career, this book describes how some workwomen have already done

in battling down the doors of sexual stereotypes. It encourages students to take control of their life, to decide what direction they want to be, to find a non-traditional job and to break down sex barriers.

The 25 most intriguing people of 1999! (1999). People Weekly. Vol. 52, No. 25.

This week's People Weekly provides readers with an overview of the 25 most intriguing people in 1999. As the American media are very influential in students' daily lives, find out which one of the following people your students will be interested in learning more about: John F. Kennedy, Jr., Ashley Judd, Ricky Martin, Serena Williams, Jesse Ventura, Julia Roberts, Dr. Robert Atkins, Sara Jane Olson, Tiger Woods, Bill Gates, Jennifer Lopez, Bruce Willis, Hillary Clinton, etc.

Annotated Bibliography of Readings to be Considered

Ashton-Jones, E. & Olson, G. A. (Ed.) (1991). The gender reader. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

A collection of sixty-one essays represents a wide range of perspectives on numerous important gender issues. It includes six major parts: (1) gender roles; (2) women's role; (3) language and sexism; (4) gender and social institutions; (5) gender and public policy; and (6) sexism and the status of women. This text is appropriate for students taking courses in composition or women's studies or any else who is thinking and writing about questions of gender.

Bakerman, J. S. (1995). Preface. In P. C. Rollions and S. W. Rollions, (Eds.), Gender in popular culture: Images of men and women in literature, visual media, and material culture (p. i). Cleveland, Oklahoma: Ridgemont Press.

The essays presented in this collection examine ways in which gender is portrayed in the American popular culture. Ranging very widely; the authors look at current phenomena, reevaluate established works in the light of contemporary awareness, and consider modifications to be made in some subgenres of popular culture.

Kunstadter, M. A. (1994). Women working A to Z. Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin: Highsmith Press.

This book was written to introduce girls to the great range of opportunities that are open to them. The author uses real examples of young girls who have grown up to assume fulfilling careers in both traditional and nontraditional women's occupations.

Lewan L. S. (1988). Women in the workplace: A man's perspective. Boulder, Colorado: Johnson Publishing Company.

The author explains why so many women are struggling with their jobs and why they work under conditions that make it difficult for them to gain full acceptance. He further develops an explanatory model and outlines the necessary

steps to bring the genders together in a more harmonious and productive fashion in the workplace.

McCracken, N. M. & Appleby, B. C. (Eds.) (1992). Gender Issues in the teaching of English. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc. McClure L.

Selection of papers from the voices of women and men, high school teachers, college professors, and students, the essays in this book bring the current research on gender and education, and on gender and language, to bear on the teaching of English in high schools and colleges.

Minas, A. (Ed.) (1993). Gender basics: Feminist perspectives on women and men. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Written from feminist perspectives, the book is intended to let readers understand women's own perceptions of their situations and to be aware of women's oppression. It consists of a variety of topics including oppression; looks and language; the workplace and sport; love; relationships; bonds; sex and sexuality; rape and sexual harassment; fertility control; reproduction; raising children and youngsters and oldsters.

Rubin, D. (1993). Gender influences: Reading student texts. The National Council of Teachers of English.

In this book, Rubin discusses how gender affects the way teachers read and evaluate students' texts. The author argues that if teachers are to overcome the influence of gender stereotypes on their perceptions of student, they must first recognize the implicit power of the influence. Rubin recommends that teachers engage in what she calls "responsive reading"--self-conscious awareness of our own inner male-female voices -- to increase our sensitivity to gender issues in assessment.

Rudman, M. K. (1995). Children literature: An issues approach (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: D. C. Heath and Company.

This is a wonderful resource for teachers who would like to design their curriculum in "an issues approach". The book is organized in three parts and each

of them consists a variety of issues: Part I-- Family (siblings, adoption and foster care, divorce and family constellations); Part II-- Life Cycle (sexuality, aging and death); Part III--Society (gender roles, heritage, special needs, abuse, and war and peace).

Szirom, T. (1988). Teaching gender? Sex education and sexual stereotypes. Winchester, MA: Allen & Unwin Inc.

This book provides a conceptual framework for the discussion the construction of gender and the place of theories of sexuality within Szirom's research. An historical perspective for current analysis of sex education is used to examine young people's attitudes and practice. Practical strategies are provided for change in the conclusion.

Tannen, D. (1990). You just don't understand: Women and Men in conversation. NY: Ballantine Books.

Identifies different conversational styles between men and women. Describes how problems arise in relationships between women and men, often simply because partners express their thoughts and feelings, and assumptions about how to communicate, in different ways. Concludes that we should sort out differences based on conversational style and find a shared language in which to negotiate them.

Wainrib, B. R. (Ed.) (1992). Gender issues across the life cycle. NY: Springer Publishing Company.

A selections of papers for a series of symposia presented to the American Psychological Association annual meeting in Boston in 1990, this book explores the effects of gender across the life cycle, which is divided into adolescence, young adulthood, the "thirty-something woman," mid-life and aging.

Wood, J. T. (1994). Gender Lives: Communication, gender, and culture. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

This book offers an excellent orientation for those who would like to learn more about communication, gender and culture. This book reflects the author's

belief that inequities are socially constructed. Wood attempts to empower readers personally and professionally by exploring issues in terms of the relationships among gender, communication, and culture, such as creating gendered identities and gendered communication in practice, etc.

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Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Appendix A

Suicide Note

How many notes written...

Ink smeared like birdprints in snow.

not good enough not pretty enough now smart enough

dear mother and father

I apologize

for disappointing you.

I've worked very hard,

not good enough

harder, perhaps to please you.

If only I were a _____, shoulders broad

as the sunset threading through pine,

I would see the light in my _____

eyes, or the golden pride reflected

in my _____ dream

of my wide, _____ hands worthy of work

and comfort.

I would swagger through life

muscled and bold and assured,

drawing praises to me

Like currents in the bed of wind, virile

with confidence.

not good enough not strong enough not good enough

I apologize

Tasks do not come easily.

Each _____, a glacier.

Each _____, a footprint.

Each _____,

ice above my river.

So I have worked hard.

not good enough

My sacrifice I will drop
bone by bone, perched
on the ledge of my _____,
fragile as wings.

not strong enough

It is snowing steadily
surely not good weather
for flying—this sparrow
sillied and dizzied by the wind
on the edge.

not smart enough

I make this ledge my altar
to offer penance.
This air will not hold me,
the snow burdens my crippled wings,
my tears drop like bitter cloth
softly into the butter below.

not good enough not strong enough not smart enough

Choices thin as shaved
ice. Notes shredded
drift like snow.

on my broken body,
covers me like whispers
of sorries
sorries.
Perhaps when they find me
they will bury
my bird bones beneath
a study pine
and scatter my feathers like
unspoken song
over this white and cold and silent
breadth of earth.

Appendix B

Motivation/Satisfier

Read over the 15 items below. Put an X in each box that applies. Don't take too much time. Just X the items that most strongly reflect your concerns.

Suppose you were looking for a job today, the things you would be most concerned about are:

- 1. The extent to which I can be myself on the job.
- 2. How well I fit in, whether I will feel accepted or as a stranger.
- 3. Opportunities for teamwork and collaborative efforts.
- 4. The salary being offered.
- 5. Opportunities for advancement, assuming good performance.
- 6. The extent to which the work I do will be really meaningful.
- 7. Opportunities for growth and development.
- 8. The kinds of health and other benefits available to employees.
- 9. The relationship I will have with my supervisor.
- 10. Whether by taking this job I can be of help to others.
- 11. Whether by taking this job I can contribute to the kinds of social change I think important.
- 12. How safe the workplace is, and how safe its location.
- 13. What others might expect of me.
- 14. Whether I will be recognized for my contributions.
- 15. The extent to which this is likely to be a stressful place.

(Continued next page)

Now circle the number of statements you Xed in the grid below.

A	B	C
4	2	1
5	3	6
8	9	7
12	13	10
15	14	11

If your responses resulted in a preponderance of circles in Column A, you are security-oriented, concerned about income, advancement, benefits and safety.

If your responses are mostly in Column B, you tend to be social in your orientation, putting emphasis on relationships with others and recognition of your efforts.

If your responses resulted mostly in Column C, you tend to be concerned about self-fulfilling, accomplishments, doing things that are worthwhile and helpful.

(Adapted from Lauffer, 1985, p. 18-19).

Appendix C

Personal Motivator-Satisfier Assessment

Rate the following factors from 4-1

- 4= very important
 3= important
 2= somewhat important
 1= not important at all

Motivator-Satisfiers	(1) What are you looking for in a job?	(2) What your current* job has to offer?	(3) Adjustment & Possibilities
1. Security			
a. Income			
b. Protection			
2. Social			
a. Meeting others' expectations			
b. Belonging, friendship			
c. Esteem, Recognition			
3. Personal			
a. Self-actualization, growth			
b. Serving, helping			
c. Changing things			

*If you are not currently employed, think of a job you recently left, or one you are considering as a future possibility.

(Adapted from Lauffer, 1985, p. 33)



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