

TITLE OF LESSON

American Literature Unit 2 Lesson 13 – Topic Selection  
*What will the research topic be?*

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 11-12: R1.0-3, 2.0, 2.4, 3.0-5, W1.0-5, 2.0-1, 2.3-4, W/O1.0-2, L/S1.0, 1.4-8

MATERIALS

**Reflective Writing Rubric** – Student Page  
**Research Process Checklist** – Student Page  
**Essay 3 Guidelines** – Student Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To **Brainstorm** ideas for selecting sources for the research project
- To meet in small groups to choose a topic
- To choose potential sources and divide the work
- To set goals for the next essay

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/Initial homework assignments. Return any graded assignments and have students place them in their binders. Check to make sure that all students have brought to class their new silent reading novels. Give credit to students that have them. For students who forgot, you may want to have some extra copies of the Independent Reading novels so that all students have something to do during Silent Reading.
- 2) **Daily Log** – Copy Daily Log below
- 3) **Sustained Silent Reading** – Read for fifteen minutes. At the end of the reading, ask students to describe an important image from their novels. Describe one from your own novel as well.

Date	Journal	Lecture Discussion	Activity	Readings	Homework
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Brainstorm</b></li> <li>2. Small Group Meetings – Select Topics</li> <li>3. Making predictions about sources</li> <li>4. Dividing work</li> </ol>	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , Chapter 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Chapter 5 of <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> <b>Dialectical Journal 3</b> (one full page).</li> <li>2. Write the first draft of Essay 3 (step 2).</li> <li>3. Continue reading novels.</li> <li>4. Study vocabulary to date.</li> </ol>

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Research Projects** – Tell students that they will meet in small groups today to discuss the ThinkQuest research projects. Remind them that they will be designing a dialect website for the ThinkQuest program. It will be an educational website about a particular dialect of American English. This will combine aspects of a research paper, with the process of designing a website. They should have written down three ideas for a topic they

would like to research (i.e. three dialects they want to analyze, find out the history of, collect examples of, and so forth).

2. **Brainstorm** —Tell them to think back to other research projects and papers they have done. Based on their past experience, what do they think will be the best sources for finding information for these projects? As they make suggestions, list the ideas on the board and tell them to write notes as well. They should be able to come up with the following ideas: books (fiction and nonfiction, including encyclopedias and dictionaries), newspapers, magazines, television shows, websites, movies, videos, interviews (with friends, family members, teachers, community members), observations, letters, phone conversations, CDs, photographs, government records and documents, and class lectures. They may also want to use their dictionary projects from the previous unit as a source or a link in this project. The dictionary may have included word samples from the dialects they want to study. If they choose to use the dictionary projects, they must treat them as they would any source they would reference. It must be related to their topic and they must get the author's permission.
3. **Primary and Secondary Sources** – Tell students to bring out their vocabulary lists and write down these two terms and their definitions: “Primary sources are actual records that have survived from the past, such as letters, photographs, articles of clothing. Secondary sources are accounts of the past created by people writing about events sometime after they happened” (From the Library of Congress website, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/source.html>). Based on these definitions, which of the above are primary sources and which are secondary sources? Call on students to write a P or an S next to each idea listed. Then ask the students why it is important to know the difference between primary and secondary sources. How does it help the researcher?
4. **Small Group Meetings** – If you haven't already assigned the students to project groups previously, you must do so (unless you want students to select their own groups). Tell the students to bring out the three research project ideas they came up with for homework (from Lesson 9). In their groups, they are going to hear everyone's ideas and then make a preliminary decision about the research topic. First, they should establish a fair method for selecting one topic from all of the ideas. Allow them five to ten minutes to discuss a process, present topics, and decide on a topic that they will work on as a group.
5. **Predictions About Sources** – Remind everyone of the **Research Process Checklist**. Although selecting a topic will be listed as the first step on the **Final Project Guidelines** sheet, the process of selecting a topic actually has several steps. Although they have made the preliminary decision about a dialect to research (and create an educational website about), they must do some initial research before narrowing their topic and creating a thesis statement. For example, someone may want to research Southern Speech, but – as they research – they may discover that there are many variants of this dialect, and they may wish to narrow the subject further. However, they should think carefully about topic selection during this initial stage, because it will be much harder to re-do all their initial research later, if they change their minds. Tell them that initial topic choices, as well as changes, must meet with your approval. After the topic selections are made, tell the groups to look over the brainstormed list of sources. They should decide, as a group, which types of sources may offer the most potential for helping to narrow their topic. They should then write down the sources they would like to consult, and make an initial plan for doing so. There will be a visit to the library in lesson 15. They may begin to consult sources that day. If anyone has an idea of sources to consult before that time, they should do so (for example, if someone has a neighbor who comes from the southern part of the United States, they may wish to ask a few questions, informally interview them, in order to help narrow the topic).
6. **Goal Setting** – Tell students to bring out the **Reflective Writing Rubric**. Remind them of the goals they set after their last essay. They should have written specifically what they would work on to get the grades they have targeted. (It could have been that they need to work on turning their work in on time, writing second drafts, or getting their papers edited properly. They should have chosen at least 2 specific things they could do to earn the grades they are shooting for. ) Tell the students to think about these goals, as well as the **Reflective Writing Rubric** and the **Essay 3 Guidelines**. Remind students that the rubric is your assessment of the quality of their work. They will also be graded on their effort and the actual work they put into the drafting process, as seen in the GRADING PROCEDURE portion of the **Guidelines**. It is their job to make sure they meet the goals they set for themselves for this essay.

7. *Their Eyes* – If there is still time, tell the class to bring out *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and open to Chapter 5. Begin reading with them (having them read aloud individually, or do choral reading). Stop after each paragraph to have them summarize. It is useful to spend some time reading this book in class. Despite all the practice in reading dialect, students may still struggle with reading this kind of writing, and it takes awhile to get used to it. If there is no time to read in class today, there will be a chance in tomorrow's lesson. Students should continue to read Chapter 5 and write [Dialectical Journal 3](#) tonight for homework.
  8. Review Homework – Students should write their second reflective essay tonight, this one about their folk groups. It should incorporate the image chosen yesterday (as a written image, not a visual one) and the important qualities they want people to know about their groups. They should always keep in mind the message of the essay, which is the larger truth they want to deliver.
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#### HOMEWORK

- 1) Read Chapter 5 of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* write [Dialectical Journal 3](#).
  - 2) Write first draft of Essay 3.
  - 3) Continue reading Independent Reading novels. (Essays due in Lesson 35)
  - 4) Study vocabulary to date.
  - 5) Organize binders. Due Lesson 15.
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#### GROUP ROLES

None

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#### DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

##### Unit 1

Project 1: A True Story  
Evaluation Essay 1  
Incident Poem  
Essay 2  
Essay 3: Satire  
Final Project: Flash Dictionary Chapter  
American Literature Unit 1 Final Exam

##### Unit 2

Essay 1: Reflective Language  
Essay 2: Novel Evaluation