

|  | 📚 [**ELA Unit**](https://sites.google.com/philasd.org/ela-4-12/home) **Planning Pathways**  ***Grade: 12; Anchor Text:* Parable of the Sower *by Octavia E. Butler***  This tool, created in partnership with [**Student Achievement Partners**](https://achievethecore.org/), provides teachers flexible pathways  to **deeply understand and analyze the text** in order to support students in **rigorous and meaningful text analysis**. |
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| **Before using this tool:**   * I have read the anchor novel for this unit. * I have reviewed the📍Unit Overview[[1]](#footnote-0) for this unit.   **How I might use this tool:**   * Select priority pathways with my team and engage in shared reading and reflection together as Part 1 of the PL cycle pre-unit launch. * Revisit these conversations/notes as part of my daily lesson planning, making more explicit connections between this unit preparation and the daily lesson guides. |
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**Choose your pathway(s):**

*Select the pathways below (click on the hyperlinked title) that best suit your needs. You will be taken to questions, prompts, and resources to consider. Text-specific prompts for* Parable of the Sower *are highlighted in blue throughout the tool.*

| [**UNIT CONTENT & ANCHOR TEXT COMPLEXITY**](#kix.z3qtc8y5rwsa)  ***What do I need to know about this unit’s content and anchor text?*** |
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| [**IDENTITY & RELEVANCE**](#kix.7e9idrnv6smu)  ***What do I bring to this text, what do my students bring, and how can I use this to prepare for instruction?*** |
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| [**CRITICALITY & CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS**](#kix.pyv7tfshd8eb)  ***How will I support my students to use their literary skills to understand, interrogate, and address oppression, power, and justice?*** |
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**U****NIT CONTENT & ANCHOR TEXT COMPLEXITY:**

*What do I need to know about this unit’s content and anchor text?*

| **📍Contextual Knowledge (Historical, Social, Cultural Context)** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *What do I* ***need to know more about*** *before engaging more deeply with this text?*  *What do I* ***need to work through*** *in order to understand and teach this text?*  *Which***📍*Contextual Knowledge is most crucial*** *for understanding the* **📍***Big Ideas? Consider also supplementing for student interests or connections to the events of today.* | Select **📍**Contextual Knowledge topics and/or [student-facing resource(s)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10X5CHCHOe3TXCL0xtq_0oENz6kNkiZgZE5N8Omm4z-0/edit#bookmark=id.fl11vh6r0axy) from the unit to support your teaching of this topic:   * Extending current social, political, economic turmoil. Specifically from massive wealth inequality, homelessness, access to social goods (fire, safety, education, housing) * Impact of global warming on climate and resources for human life, especially marginalized communities * Baptist Christianity * Social and political changes of the 1960s (note: consider utopian movements) * The founding and goals of the Black Panther Party * Poetry of the Black Arts movement * The role of representation in media * Redlining and housing discriminatory policies and practices * Bonded/Debt Laborers (note: and company towns)  | **When I think of the content/topic of this text, what first comes to mind is** |  | | --- | --- | | **This means I have biases and/or potential knowledge gaps about** |  | | **My next step is** |  |   Task: Identify or pre-read supporting resources to help you learn more about the topics above, as needed. [See here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10X5CHCHOe3TXCL0xtq_0oENz6kNkiZgZE5N8Omm4z-0/edit#bookmark=id.fl11vh6r0axy) for additional resources.  Select**📍**Contextual Knowledge topics from the Unit Overview and links to resources that will support your teaching of this topic:   | **Topic**  **(📍Content Knowledge from Unit Overview)** | **Knowledge-Building Resources**  **(For Teachers)** | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  |  | **Based on building my own understanding about this unit, I need to keep in mind that my students may need:** | | | --- | --- | |  | | |
| **Anchor Text** | |
| *Which elements of this text are* ***most complex****: structure demands, language demands, meaning/purpose and/or knowledge demands?* ***See the rubric on the next page to evaluate this text.***  *How might the* ***identity/ perspective of this author*** *influence the way in which they wrote this text?*  *Which* ***parts (chapters, passages, excerpts) of the text*** *are:*   * *Particularly challenging?* * *Less challenging?* * *Most aligned to the****📍****Big Ideas/Essential Questions?* | Use the qualitative complexity rubrics on the [next pages](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a_fDPcR6_XCsf18NIKaVNhsgGnA1U7Z8rp08exgTkXs/edit#bookmark=id.cobl7klq76zg) (literary or informational) to evaluate this text.   | **This text is complex because of:** | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | * **Structure** | * **Language** | * **Meaning/Purpose** | * **Knowledge** |  | **I will support students by** |  | | --- | --- |   ***RESOURCES:***   * [***Supports to Access Complex Text Across Disciplines (Grades 6-12)***](https://achievethecore.org/page/3324/quarter-turns-supports-to-access-complex-text-across-disciplines) * [***Supporting All Learners with Complex Texts (K-12)***](https://achievethecore.org/page/3251/supporting-all-learners-with-complex-text)  | **When I researched the author, I learned that** | Sample resources: Author, Octavia Butler, [brief bio](https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/octavia-estelle-butler#:~:text=Octavia%20Estelle%20Butler%20was%20born,a%20maid%20and%20her%20grandmother.); [NPR article](https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/07/10/535879364/octavia-butler-writing-herself-into-the-story) | | --- | --- | | **I will consider this when I teach this text by** |  |  | **I am flagging these chapters/passages/excerpts** |  | | --- | --- | | **because they set the stage for** |  | |

***Literary Text Qualitative Analysis[[2]](#footnote-1)***

*Use the rubric below by highlighting levels of complexity for this text for each qualitative category (structure, language, meaning, and knowledge).*

*Take care to* ***note specific examples from the text*** *that support your determinations in each section.*

|  | **EXCEEDINGLY COMPLEX** | **VERY COMPLEX** | **MODERATELY COMPLEX** | **SLIGHTLY COMPLEX** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***STRUCTURE*** | **Organization:** Is intricate with regard to such elements as point of view, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail  **Use of Graphics:** If used, illustrations or graphics are essential for understanding the meaning of the text | **Organization:** May include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters  **Use of Graphics:** If used, illustrations or graphics support or extend the meaning of the text | **Organization:** May have two or more storylines and occasionally be difficult to predict  **Use of Graphics:** If used, a range of illustrations or graphics support selected parts of the text | **Organization:** Is clear, chronological or easy to predict  **Use of Graphics:** If used, either illustrations directly support and assist in interpreting the text or are not necessary to understanding the meaning of the text |
| ***LANGUAGE*** | **Conventionality:** Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language\*  **Vocabulary:** Complex, generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading\*  **Sentence Structure:** Mainly complex sentences with several subordinate clauses or phrases; sentences often contain multiple concepts | **Conventionality:** Fairly complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language\*  **Vocabulary:** Fairly complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic\*  **Sentence Structure:** Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words | **Conventionality:** Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning\*  **Vocabulary:** Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic\*  **Sentence Structure:** Primarily simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions | **Conventionality:** Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand\*  **Vocabulary:** Contemporary, familiar, conversational language\*  **Sentence Structure:** Mainly simple sentences |
| ***MEANING*** | Multiple competing levels of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text | Multiple levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text | Multiple levels of meaning clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety | One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text |
| ***KNOWLEDGE*** | **Life Experiences:** Explores complex, sophisticated or abstract themes; experiences portrayed are distinctly different from the common reader\*  **Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:** Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements\* | **Life Experiences:** Explores themes of varying levels of complexity or abstraction; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers\*  **Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:** Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements\* | **Life Experiences:** Explores several themes; experiences portrayed are common to many readers\*  **Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:** Few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements\* | **Life Experiences:** Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are everyday and common to most readers\*  **Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:** No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements\* |

**IDENTITY & RELEVANCE**

*What do I bring to this text, what do my students bring, and how can I use this to prepare for instruction?*

| **My Identity** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *How will* ***my identities,[[3]](#footnote-2) lived experiences, and perspectives*** *impact my instruction of these texts?*  *What* ***biases*** *do I hold related to this text’s/unit’s content? How can I continuously reflect on and work against those biases?* | **📍** **Identity objectives** from the Unit Overview:  *Students will learn:*   * *To consider how our intersecting identities shape our perspectives and the way we experience the world.* * *Differences in power and privilege can influence the relationships we have with each other; these differences can affect our sense of community and its development.* * *To deepen their identities by exploring their stance on critical issues in today’s society.*  | **I am a(n)** |  | **person** | | --- | --- | --- | | **teaching about** | a sci-fi dystopian future novel with a Black female protagonist. I am teaching [Octavia Butler’s work](https://library.princeton.edu/news/general/2020-07-24/afrofuturism-how-octavia-butler-moving-us-forward), which includes intersecting ideas about religion, feminism, Afrofuturism. | | | **I must attend to this while teaching this unit by** |  | |  | **I hold biases about** |  | | --- | --- | | **and will work against these by** |  | |
| **Students’ Identities** | |
| *What do I know about* ***students' identities, lived experiences, and perspectives*** *related to this text? What* ***do I NOT know*** *(or am assuming)?*  *How might I use this unit as an opportunity to use what I know about students as an* ***asset*** *to discussion/analysis OR to* ***deepen my knowledge*** *and understanding of students?* | Consider students’ identities, lived experiences, and perspectives and this text’s content:   | **Key Text Consideration for Identity** *(Adjust or add your own)* | **Notes** | | --- | --- | | Connection to religion: Baptist Christianity, emergence of new religious movements |  | | Familial and communal turbulence and connections |  | | Humanity of people living in poverty and people struggling with drug addiction |  | | Navigating conversations and experiences around racial, physical and sexual violence |  | | Racial and socio-economic oppression by dominant institutions and groups |  |  | **To attend to students who self-identify as** |  | | --- | --- | | **I will** |  | | **My students bring to our understanding**  **of the text the assets of** |  | |
| **Making It Relevant** | |
| *What is happening in* ***students'*** *other classes, neighborhoods, communities, and worlds right now that could* ***enhance their connection to this text?***  *What are my* ***assumptions and/or potential concerns*** *about how this text might land with my students? How will I delve into these potential concerns?*  *How might this text connect to experiences that lead students to* ***take action*** *in their lives and communities?* | | **I think my students may be able to relate to this text by connecting with** | *Potential* opportunities for students to relate to: family structures; housing insecurity; youth activism; choosing names; racist policies and practices; religious communities; personal romantic relationships; coming of age;... | | --- | --- | | **I want to be sensitive to my students’ reaction to the text when it references** |  | |

**CRITICALITY & CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS**

*How will I support my students to use their literary skills to understand, interrogate, and address oppression, power, and justice?*

| **Connections to Big Ideas & Criticality[[4]](#footnote-3) 📍** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *What do I/my* ***students already know, think, and believe*** *about the* **📍***Big Ideas in this text?*  *What* ***assumptions*** *am I making about the realities and experiences that impact the people/events in this text? How will I uncover the assumptions students might be making?*  *What opportunities exist in the text for relevance and connection to* ***power, privilege, social justice, and oppression*** *and their impacts on communities and society?*  *What are the connections to these* **📍***Big Ideas from* ***multiple perspectives****, including culture, identities, beliefs, and values?* | Consider both the Big Ideas and Criticality Objectives for this unit as you reflect on the Guiding Questions:   | **📍Big Ideas from**  **the Unit Overview:** | * Rather than being static or stable, the roles of parent and child can be fluid as individuals adapt and grow; **family** can be created through **community** as well as birth and roles within a family can also change. * Choosing a new name (for oneself or for another person) can be a revolutionary act, a way to claim or celebrate a new self and **identity**. * For an individual forced to grow up too quickly, **coming of age** may require reclaiming childhood and embracing youth; young people coming of age in a turbulent era may have to reconcile conflicting influences to develop more mature perspectives. * Poetry can be a way to empower formerly **oppressed people** or groups; by closely reading a lot of different poetry, readers are able to access multiple levels of meaning and perspective. * **Differing abilities** can be viewed as a strength or a weakness depending on the situation. * **Education** is an important tool to improve ourselves and our communities. * **Respecting environments** also ensures that communities have adequate resources to meet their needs and many of their wants. * **Building** up a **community** helps foster communication among people. | | --- | --- | | **📍Criticality Connection from**  **the Unit Overview:** | Students will deconstruct and analyze the text from several critical points of view using literary lenses; Suggest social commentary / author’s purpose in context to critical analysis; Recommend call-to-action solutions; Analyze content and context through culturally relevant critical lenses to identify various social commentary elements indicative of the author's purpose; Think critically about community development and overall values and social structures needed to build a better future for themselves, their communities, and society at large. |  | **My students already know, think, and believe that** |  | | --- | --- | | **As a class, we need to be careful about making the assumption(s) that** |  |  | **This text provides an opportunity for oral and written discourse on how society is impacted by:** | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | * **Power** | * **Privilege** | * **Social Justice** | * **Oppression** | | **For example:** | | | | |  | | | | |
| **Difficult Topics and Disrupting Oppression** | |
| *Which part(s) of the text* ***connects to what I believe and value****?*  *Which part(s) of the text reflects* ***how we view injustice*** *in our communities and society at large?*  *What* ***cautions exist*** *in the text that include harmful content (including language and images), stereotypes, or misinformation? How will I respond to these cautions in the text?*  *Are there any* ***students who might be STRONGLY affected*** *by the topic? Who? What are the necessary conditions to prevent isolating or tokenizing the student(s)?* | | **In the text, I read** |  | | --- | --- | | **which connects to my belief/value of** |  | |  | | | **In the text, I read** |  | | **which pushes against my belief/value of** |  |  | **Note any key areas of the text that may require considerations to navigate heavy, difficult, or “hot button” topics. (e.g., death, harassment, racism, religion, sexuality, violence).** | | | --- | --- | | **Sensitive Topic** | **Text Passage** | | **Oppression**  (📍Big Idea) | **Text Passage:** (L4/Pg 22) “She didn’t like the Hsu family because they were Chinese and Hispanic, and the older Chinese generation is still Buddhist…’Idolaters,’ she would call them…”   * + - (Pg 246) “The penalty for being too poor to be worth robbing is a beating, a rape, and/or death.”     - (L8/Pg 87) “Last year when Craig Dunn who’s white and one of the saner members of the Dunn family was caught making love to Siti Moss who’s black and Richard Moss’s oldest daughter to boot, I thought someone was going to get killed. Crazy.”     - (L23/Pg 288) “Emery and her children became responsible for the Solis debt…[Emery] had terrible suspicions when she recovered from the drug she had been given to ‘quiet her down.’ She cried and demanded the return of her sons and would not work again until her masters threatened to take her daughter as well.”     - **Key text considerations**: racism, ethnocentrism stereotypes, violence, slavery, debt-bondage | | **Environment** (📍Big Idea) | **Text Passage:** (L4/Pg 17) “All that money wasted on another crazy space trip when so many people here on earth can’t afford water, food, or shelter. The cost of water has gone up again. And I heard on the news today that more water peddlers are being killed. Peddlers sell water to squatters and the street poor—and to people who’ve managed to hold on to their homes, but not to pay their utility bills. Peddlers are being found with their throats cut and their money and their handtrucks stolen.”   * (L6/Pg 53) “There are too many poor people—illiterate, jobless, homeless, without decent sanitation or clean water. They have plenty of water down there, but a lot of it is polluted.” * **Key text considerations**: housing insecurity, water and food scarcity, murder, violence, illiteracy | | **Community**  (📍Big Idea) | **Text Passage:** (L3/Pg 10) “...most of the street poor– squatters, winos, junkies, homeless people in general– are dangerous. They’re desperate or crazy or both…they cut off each other’s ears, arms, legs…they carry untreated diseases and festering wounds.”   * + (L4/Pgs 22-23) “We took up collections for her at church. The thieves had tied her up and left her– after one of them raped her...I began writing this about Mrs. Sims because she killed herself.”   + (Pgs 72; 75) “Now we have a regular neighborhood watch….When they do, we should be able to give them something they don’t expect.” “...ever off-duty watcher answered the whistles last night? They came out to defend their community.”   + **Key text considerations**: poverty, homelessness, suicide, rape, violence | | Family (📍Big Idea) | **Text Passage:** (L3/Pg 12) “To my father, the whole business is shameful. He’s a preacher and a professor and a dean. A first wife who was a drug addict and a daughter who is drug damaged is not something he wants to boast about.”   * + (L9/Pg 97) “Keith wouldn’t say where he’d been or how he’d gotten the new things, so Dad beat him bloody.”   + (L10/Pg 112; 115) “Today, my parents had to go downtown to identify the body of my brother Keith.” “It’s just that I hated Keith at least as much as I loved him…..He messed up our family, broke it into something less than a family.”   + **Key text considerations**: drug addiction, death, abusive discipline` | | Coming of Age (📍Big Idea) | **Text Passage:** (L3/Pg 12) “I’m supposed to share pleasure and pain, but there isn’t much pleasure around these days. About the only pleasure I’ve found that I enjoy sharing is sex. I get the guy’s good feeling and my own.”   * + (L8/Pg 77) “The particular God-is-Change belief system that seems right to me will be called Earthseed. I’ve tried to name it before. Failing that, I’ve tried to leave it unnamed. Neither effort has made me comfortable. Name plus purpose equals focus for me.”   + **Key text considerations**: sex, religion |   ***RESOURCE:***   * [***Facilitating Critical Conversations from Let's Talk! - A Learning for Justice Guide***](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/LFJ-2111-Lets-Talk-November-2021-11172021.pdf#page=18) |

| **ADDITIONAL NOTES/ACTION STEPS**  *As you reflect independently and/or with your team, identify some actions you want to take in preparing for instruction and adapting the unit/lesson guidance.* | |
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| *For example:*  📘 Prioritize/deprioritize [section(s) of the text] for classroom instruction/small group support/independent reading/homework...  👋 Reach out to [colleague, student, family or community member, etc.]...  🪞 Reflect more on… / 🧠 Learn more about…  🔃 Adjust the [pacing/activities/support/ Big Ideas/Essential Questions] by… | **My Notes:** |

1. The 📍symbol is used throughout to note connections to the Unit Overview. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Original rubric: [Literary and Informational Text Qualitative Rubrics](http://navigatingtextcomplexity.kaulfussec.com/files/QualitativeRubricsforLiteraryandInformationalText.pdf) from the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS)

   \* In making these determinations, consider the students in the room. For whom is language conversational? From whom would it be “easy-to-understand”? How much do you know about students’ cultural/literary knowledge related to the content in this text? Whose cultural/literary knowledge are you considering as you think about what will be “common”? How does this allow you, or not allow you, to center historically and/or currently marginalized students? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. In considering identity, you might think about any of the following: ability, age, body type, ethnicity, gender, home language, immigration status, socio-economic status, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other considerations important to you. For more, see [Let’s Talk, Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students, Learning for Justice](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/TT-Let-s-Talk-Publication-January-2020.pdf#page=8), p. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. From Dr. Gholdy Muhammad’s *Five Learning Pursuits*. Read more [here](https://magazine.achieve3000.com/issue/volume-1-issue-4/cultivating-genius/). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)