

# Professional Learning Communities in Action

IVC Series with web-based support  
From Utah State Office of Education

**(Broadcasting from the USOE Studio: alias 2123 or 205.124.233.42)**

Adobe Connect for Individuals on the computer use this URL:

<http://connect.schools.utah.gov/slc/>

Support materials can be downloaded at: <http://www.schools.utah.gov/CURR/langartsec/>

September 13 and October 11 Sessions Archived at: <http://connect.schools.utah.gov/p3xsdh0ru4j/>

## High School Fridays at 3:00-3:30: Nov. 1, Dec 13. Feb. 14

### Basic documents for each session:

1. Cognitive Rigor Matrix
2. Close Reading Self-Assessment Rubric (Grade Band 11-12)
3. Argument Writing Rubric (Grade Band 11-12)

### FOCUS Standards:

#### **Reading Standard:**

- (Integration of Knowledge and Ideas): **Analyze** how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

#### **Argument Writing Standard as Academic Writing (Grade Band 11-12)**

- Develop claim(s) and counterclaim(s) fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

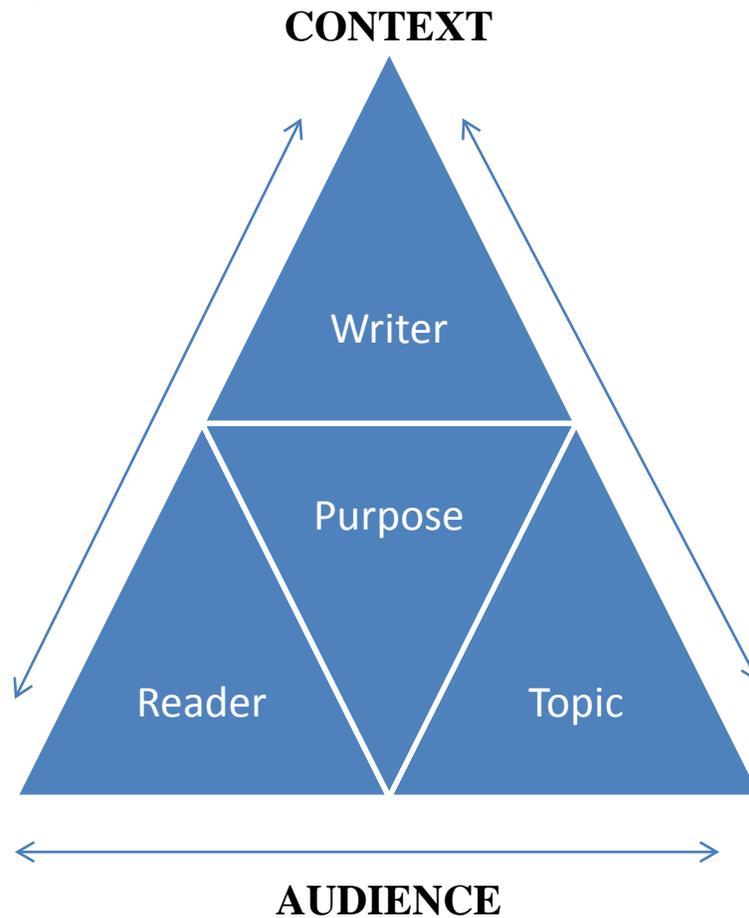
Learning Task 1 A: Please read the Reading Standard carefully and decide which theme or topic you will use to develop a Student Performance Assessment that supports students ANALYZING (comparing and contrasting) two or more texts from both a content approach as well as each author's perspectives.

2A: Based on what your students are currently reading or will be reading: Write the TOPIC or THEME here and explain why this topic, theme, or essential question is the BEST topic for supporting students in writing claims and counterclaims and using best evidence from multiple texts.

Learning Task 2A: Please read the Argument Writing standard carefully and decide who the audience will be for the students' argument essay. Why this audience? Based on the standard how will your text-dependent writing prompt support the students in developing both a claim and counterclaim?

Turn to a colleague and discuss the reasons for your selections, be concrete and specific. We will hear a sample.

**“The way we read and structure language is always rhetorical: that is, always dependent on how speakers or writers, topics, audiences, contexts and purposes interact to make communication work”** (p. 52, 2014, Joliffe & Rosskelly)



## PRACTICE IN APPLYING THE STANDARDS THROUGH THE USE OF STUDENT LEARNING TASKS

### CONTEXT:

Learning Task 2A: Read the above excerpt from the Preface written by Harvard scholar, Henry Louis Gates for the purpose of identifying a possible theme, topic, or essential question that could be used to support students' close reading of selected excerpts from "The Bondswoman's Narrative" as well as other related texts.

Preface to the Trade Edition of "The Bondswoman's Narrative" by Henry Louis Gates Jr., Harvard University.

On February 15, 2001, I bought a manuscript that I believe to be the first novel written by a fugitive slave. 'The Bondswoman Narrative' was written by someone who called herself 'Hannah Crafts' and is patterned after gothic and sentimental novels – especially Charles Dickens' Bleak House, Walter Scott's Roby Roy, and Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre – as well as African slave narratives, such as Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown. Unpublished for one hundred and fifty years, the novel is a source of fascination as a testament to the will of a black woman determined to utilize fiction both to indict her oppressors and testify to her own irresistible desire to be free.

Learning Task 3A: Using a pen, pencil or highlighter underline or circle possible topics, themes, or essential questions that also might prove interesting for writing. Turn to a partner and explain why these topics might be engaging for students. We will hear a sample.

**TEXT ONE:** Preface by Hannah Crafts

“In presenting this record of plain unvarnished facts to a generous public I feel a certain degree of diffidence and self-distrust. I ask myself for the hundredth time How will such a literary venture, coming from a sphere so humble be received? Have I succeeded in portraying any of the peculiar features of that institution whose curse rests over the fairest land the sun shines upon? Have I succeeded in showing how it blights the happiness of the white as well as the black race? Being the truth it makes no pretensions to romance, and relating events as they occurred it has no especial reference to a moral, but to those who on the former account, while others of pious and discerning minds can scarcely fail to recognize the hand of Providence in giving to the righteous their reward of their works, and to the wicked the fruit of their doings.”

Learning Task 3B: What is the viewpoint of the author in relation to her audience, topic, and context. Complete this sentence:

The viewpoint of the author is:

Learning Task 3C: Now with a partner explain your reasoning for how you constructed your writer’s viewpoint statement based on the inferences you MADE from textual evidence from her preface. Highlight the textual clues for what you infer about the writer.

**Henry Louis Gates Jr., Harvard University.**

**Learning Task 4A:** What is Gates viewpoint about the literary canon (literature that has been studied in United States Schools and is based on British literature or Anglo-Saxon and Western European cultural history)? Use textual evidence to explain your reasoning.

**TEXT TWO:** While Gates has stressed the need for greater recognition of black literature and black culture, he does not advocate a "separatist" black canon. Rather, he works for greater recognition of black works and their integration into a larger, pluralistic canon. He has affirmed the value of the Western tradition, but has envisioned a more inclusive canon of diverse works sharing common cultural connections:

“ Every black American text must confess to a complex ancestry, one high and low (that is, literary and vernacular) but also one white and black...there can be no doubt that white texts inform and influence black texts (and *vice versa*), so that a thoroughly integrated canon of American literature is not only politically sound, it is intellectually sound as well.<sup>[2]</sup>

”

### TEXT THREE:

I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man.

**Nelson Mandela**

**Learning Task 5A:** What can you infer from the above quote by Nelson Mandela about race relations, either in the United States or in his home country in South Africa? Base your reasoning on Mandela's choice of words, be specific.

**Learning Task 5B:** With your partner explain how the meaning of the Mandela quote can be connected to the previous texts of Hannah Crafts preface

**Learning Task 6:** Which of the following claims can best be applied to all three texts (using textual evidence please explain your rationale - reasoning):

1. Racism enslaves all races.
2. Freedom always comes with a price.
3. Race is never a matter of just black or white.
4. Human nature is the cause of all racism.

**OTHER OPTION:** If you do not choose any of the above claims, with another person, please construct a claim of your own which is stated simply in a single sentence and that you can use across all three texts based on textual evidence you will use to explain your reasoning.

## Background information about Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

After a month at [Yale Law School](#), Gates withdrew from the program. In October 1975 he was hired by Charles T. Davis as a secretary in the Afro-American Studies department at Yale. In July 1976, Gates was promoted to the post of Lecturer in Afro-American Studies with the understanding that he would be promoted to Assistant Professor upon completion of his [dissertation](#). Jointly appointed to assistant professorships in English and Afro-American Studies in 1979, Gates was promoted to Associate Professor in 1984.

After being denied [tenure](#) at Yale, Gates accepted a position at [Cornell University](#) in 1985, where he taught until 1989. Following a two-year stay at [Duke University](#), he was recruited to [Harvard University](#) in 1991. At Harvard, Gates teaches undergraduate and graduate courses as the Alphonse Fletcher [University Professor](#), an endowed chair he was appointed to in 2006, and as Professor of English.<sup>[5]</sup> Additionally, he serves as the Director of the [W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research](#).

As a literary theorist and [critic](#), Gates has combined literary techniques of [deconstruction](#) with native African literary traditions; he draws on [structuralism](#), [post-structuralism](#), and [semiotics](#) to [textual analysis](#) and matters of [identity politics](#). As a black intellectual and public figure, Gates has been an outspoken critic of the [Eurocentric](#) literary canon. He has insisted that [black literature](#) must be evaluated by the aesthetic criteria of its culture of origin, not criteria imported from Western or European cultural traditions that express a "tone deafness to the black cultural voice" and result in "intellectual racism."<sup>[2]</sup> In his major scholarly work, [The Signifying Monkey](#), a 1989 [American Book Award](#) winner, Gates expressed what might constitute a [black cultural aesthetic](#). The work extended application of the concept of "[signifyin\(g\)](#)" to analysis of African-American works; it thus rooted African-American literary criticism in the African-American vernacular tradition.

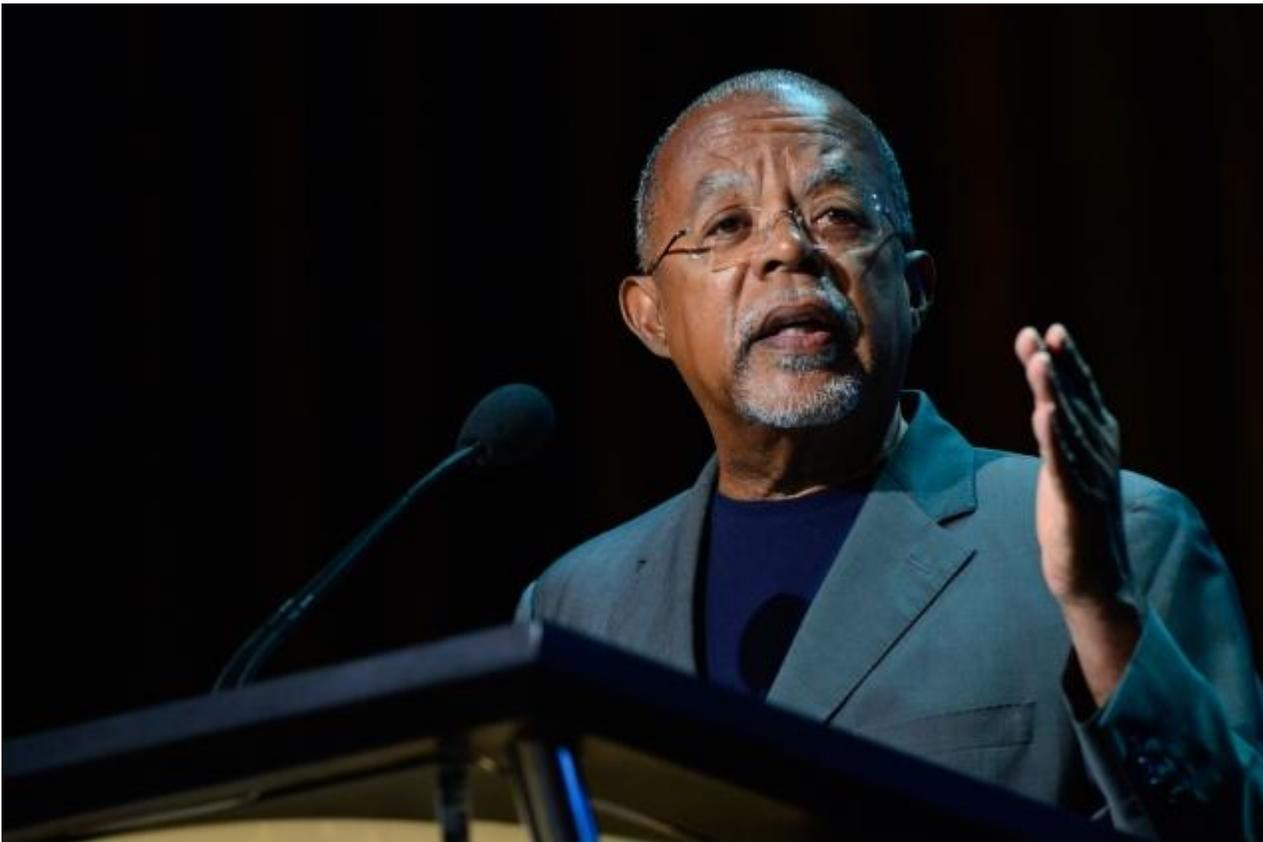
### [TV & Movies](#)

## Henry Louis Gates Jr. debuts his new documentary for PBS, 'The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross'

The noted scholar and author says the six-part series covers 'the full complexity of the black experience,' looking beyond slavery and into the lives and contributions of free blacks

BY [DAVID HINCKLEY](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Monday, October 21, 2013, 2:00 AM



**Writer and scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. is behind the PBS show “The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross.”**

BLACK HISTORY documentaries and dramatizations surface regularly on television, but scholar and author Henry Louis Gates Jr. says his new one for PBS takes a different tack.

“The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross” premieres Tuesday at 8 p.m. and runs for six weeks. It’s set up chronologically, with each hour focusing on a defined era.

Tuesday’s opener, titled “The Black Atlantic,” covers 1500 to 1800. The final episode, covering 1968 to the present, is titled, with just a splash of irony, “A More Perfect Union.”

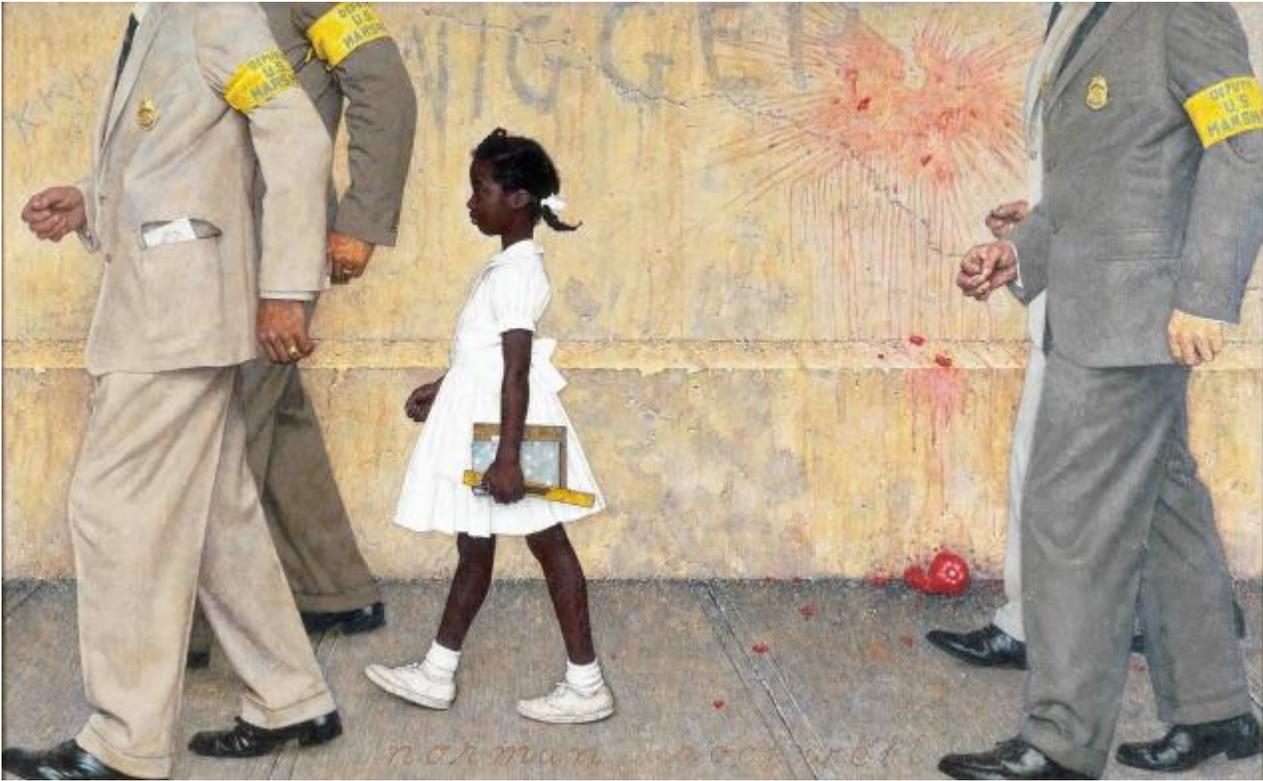
What sets “Many Rivers” apart, says Gates, is that it covers “the full complexity of the black experience. This isn’t just about slavery. It’s also about the lives and contributions of free blacks.

“African Americans have always been two peoples with two stories — one slave, one free. I found it startling, as we’ve put this series together, how little most people know about that other story.”

The first episode, Gates notes, also expands the story of slavery and free blacks outside the borders of what would become the U.S.A.

The overwhelming majority of African slaves, millions in all, were sent elsewhere in the “New World.” At the same time, one of the most successful Spanish “conquistadors” was a black man, African-born Juan Garrido.

“If you want to understand the full scope of the black experience, you have to know stories like this,” says Gates, and “Many Rivers” follows that principle, telling its larger stories through individual biographical narratives.



Norman Rockwell depicted the history-changing walk by the 6-year old Ruby Bridges in his iconic painting entitled “The Problem We All Live With.” It appears in the PBS show “The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross.”

Link to Information about Ruby Bridges:

[http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/rooseveltms/portfolio/cav\\_blk5/hillary\\_w/bio.htm](http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/rooseveltms/portfolio/cav_blk5/hillary_w/bio.htm)

