



Unit Plan



Content Area: Culture & Literature


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Title: Sustainability of Culture Through Literature Conversations

We welcome you to the table today to have a conversation on the purpose of literature, especially our own indigenous literature not only to the sustainability of our own culture, but the sustainability of all global cultures.

The driving questions for today's conversation and the online follow up are:

- What is the purpose of literature to a community?
- How can we learn from one another to preserve resources (the voices of our elders, the voices of our children)?
- What choices will help us to sustain/nurture our voices?
- How can one person, one voice make a difference?



Talk story session I (*Activating the Learning/ Building the Background*)- conversation starters for what is the purpose of literature to a community?


- What is your favorite book? Poem? What does this piece/pieces mean to you? How has it affected you?
- When you listen to others' stories about their literature experiences, what patterns do we see? What then is the purpose of literature to this community of people gathered today?

Talk story session II (*Deepening the Understanding*) - looking at indigenous writers from two cultures

Look at the two literary pieces (one of your pieces and one of ours) –

- What parallels are in each piece?
- What universal themes are touched on?
- What do they say about each community?

Talk story session III (*Applying the Learning*)- follow up, continuation of conversation

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- What other works represent your community? What represents where you're from, your struggles, your history, your hopes and dreams?
 - How do we sustain and nurture the voices from your community?
 - What can you do to make this happen?

Sobukwe

On his death

It was our suffering
and our tears
that nourished and kept him alive
their law that killed him

Let no dirges be sung
no shrines be raised
to burden his memory
sages such as he
need no tombstones
to speak their fame

Lay him down on a high mountain
that he may look
on the land he loved
the nation for which he died

Men feared the fire of his soul
-Don Mattera

Uluhaimalama

We have gathered
with manacled hands;
we have gathered
with shackled feet;
we have gathered
in the dust of forget
seeking the vein
which will not collapse.
We have bolted
the gunner's fence,
given sacrament
on blood-stained walls.
We have linked souls
end to end
against the razor's slice.
We have kissed brothers
in frigid cells,
pressing our mouths
against their ice-hard pain.
We have feasted well
on the stones of the land**
we have gathered
in dark places
and put down roots.
We have covered the Earth,
bold flowers for her crown.
We have climbed
the high wire of treason—
we will not fall.

(Written in honor of Queen Lili'uokalani on
the anniversary of her birthday)
-Mahealani Perez-Wendt

Notes for "Sobukwe"

Activist Robert Sobukwe (born Dec. 5, 1924, Graaff-Reinet, Cape Colony — died Feb. 27, 1978, Kimberley, S.Af.) South African black nationalist leader. Sobukwe insisted that South Africa be returned to its indigenous inhabitants ("Africa for the Africans"). Charging the African National Congress with being contaminated by non-African influences, he founded the Pan-Africanist Congress in 1959 and became a leader in the Pan-African movement. Arrested in 1960, he spent the rest of his life in prison or under house arrest.



Robert Sobukwe

Notes for "Uluhaimalama"

* Uluhaimalama: The name of Queen Lili'uokalani's garden. The kaona (poetic meaning) of that word is that as plants grow up out of the dark into the light, so shall light come to the Hawaiian nation.

** Feasting on stones is a reference to Kaulana Nā Pua, the song of protest written after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation. In it, the songwriter says that Hawaiians would rather eat stones than accept any annexationist proffer.

Queen Lili'uokalani was the last reigning queen of the Hawaiian nation.

She tried to amend the constitution to restore some of the power lost during the reign of her brother, King Kalakaua. Local sugar planters and businessmen feared a loss of revenue and influence and instigated an overthrow. To avoid bloodshed, the Queen yielded her throne on January 17, 1893. A provisional government was established.

In 1895 she was imprisoned for eight months in 'Iolani Palace for her alleged knowledge of a counterrevolutionary attempt by her supporters.

On July 7, 1898, President McKinley signed the resolution annexing Hawaii to the United States.

Queen Liliuokalani

