3–5 Scenario

Ms. Robinson is a fifth-grade language arts teacher at a rural school. Recently, her school has experienced an increase in incidents of bullying among fifth-grade girls. While much of the bullying has taken place in the hallways and the lunchroom, some of the bullying has taken place after school hours through social media. You hope to improve your school climate by incorporating empathy-building texts and cooperative activities into your curriculum. You also see the need to maintain academic rigor.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
When are identities a burden?

CENTRAL TEXT
The Skin I’m In (Chapter 3)

STRATEGIES
Word Work: My Pile, Your Pile
Close and Critical Reading: Think Aloud
Community Inquiry: Value Line

TASKS
Write to the Source: Point of View
Do Something: Poetry and Storytelling Cafe

The Skin I’m In (Chapter 3), by Sharon Flake

The Skin I’m In, a novel written by Sharon Flake and published in 1998, portrays how Maleeka Madison, a middle school student, is taunted by her peers for being “[s]kinny, poor, black Maleeka.” The excerpt from The Skin I’m In in the Central Text Anthology highlights the bullying and exclusion Maleeka experiences based on her skin color and clothing. The text falls under the justice domain of the Anti-bias Framework and addresses the themes of race and ethnicity, individual and society, membership and solidarity.

Visit perspectives.tolerance.org to read this text and see how it aligns to the Anti-bias Framework.
Word Work

MY PILE, YOUR PILE

CCSS
L.3.4, L.3.6, L.4.4, L.4.6, L.5.4, L.5.6

WHAT?
My Pile, Your Pile is an interactive word game that increases students’ Tier Two and Tier Three vocabularies.

WHEN?
Before, during or after reading

WHY?
Students need to practice learning and using new words to comprehend central texts. Playing a word game provides repeated, engaging practice and cements word usage in students’ working vocabularies.

HOW?
1. Choose your vocabulary words.
2. Put students into groups of two to four.
3. Give each student five index cards and a different color marker. Have students write their initials on one corner of each card.
4. Have students choose four words from the selected vocabulary words.
5. Direct students to write each word correctly on a separate index card.
6. Direct students to find each word in the central text.
7. Direct students to write a definition in their own words on the other side of the card. Prompt students to define the word by using context clues from the central text.
8. Have students confirm their definitions with group members or classroom resources (e.g., dictionaries).
9. Direct students to compose a sentence using the word and write it under the definition.
10. Direct students to draw a picture on the front of the card to remind them of the meaning of the word.
11. Pair students with someone who was not in their original groups.
12. Instruct pairs of students to play My Pile, Your Pile according to the following directions:
   • Student A quizzes student B
   • Student B quizzes student A.
   • If student A can define the word and spell it correctly, the word is placed in the center pile.
   • If student A does not know the word, student B keeps the card.
   • Players trade piles and repeat the process. The goal is for all cards to be in the center pile.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Modify this activity by using students’ native languages (if more than one student speaks the same language). The cards also function as flashcards for individual practice. Flashcards are helpful for English language
learners because they can be tailored to individual levels of language acquisition. This strategy also lends itself well to a modification in which students list cognates for the identified word from their native language.

**CONNECTION TO ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION**

My Pile, Your Pile contributes to a more inclusive and equitable classroom environment by giving students the opportunity to be successful and encouraging to each other. Students interact in small groups, practice talking with each other, and work and play cooperatively.
Close and Critical Reading

THINK ALOUD

WHAT?
Think Aloud requires readers to stop during their reading to think, reflect and discuss their process. Readers talk about skipping text, rereading, searching back in the text for information, questioning, clarifying, summarizing, making connections, reflecting, predicting and visualizing.¹

WHEN?
During reading

WHY?
The Think Aloud strategy facilitates conversations about reading for understanding, giving you insight into how your students are processing texts as readers. By modeling, turning over the responsibility to the student and observing her think aloud as she reads, you can identify what reading comprehension skills the student has mastered and what skills she may need to develop. Think Aloud also fosters meta-cognition skills necessary for students to become successful independent

HOW?
1. Select a central text.
2. Project the text in a visible location.
3. Identify reading skills most of your students need to work on. These will be the topics for your mini-lessons.
   Consider these possibilities:
   • Asking questions
   • Clarifying
   • Connecting to other texts
   • Making predictions
   • Narrating thoughts while reading
   • Reflecting
   • Rereading
   • Reviewing for information
   • Skipping
   • Summarizing
   • Surveying for text features
   • Using evidence from the text to respond
   • Visualizing
4. Highlight part of the text conducive to demonstrating the skills you selected for the mini-lessons. Model the skills aloud.
5. Have students record the skills you demonstrate on the Think Aloud checklist.
6. After modeling Think Aloud, have students practice with a partner or in a small group, using the Think Aloud checklist as a talking guide.

7. Observe and scaffold students during partner or small-group Think Aloud. These observations can function as formative assessments.

3-5CCR_Think Aloud handout

**English language learners**

Think Aloud is among the most effective strategies to use with English language learners. It is especially helpful for predicting and summarizing. Model this strategy explicitly and frequently during mini-lessons. Thinking aloud is a meta-cognitive process; by demonstrating these techniques, teachers encourage self-awareness and show English language learners that they are ongoing learners.

**Connection to anti-bias education**

Think Aloud encourages students to describe their individual process for reading and connecting to the text. Community sharing broadens student understanding that each member of the classroom community contributes a unique perspective and experience.

**HANDOUT**

Think Aloud Checklist

3-5CCR_Think Aloud handout
Community Inquiry

VALUE LINE

CCSS
R.3.1, R.4.1, R.5.1, SL.3.1, SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.3.3, SL.4.3, SL.5.3, SL.3.6, SL.4.6, SL.5.6

WHAT?
Students take a stance on a topic related to the central text and listen while classmates explain their stances.

WHEN?
After reading

WHY?
Value Line teaches students to question the text and deepen comprehension through observing and listening to others. The strategy incorporates movement, which can enhance student understanding and participation. By building in the opportunity to change one’s stance, students see that personal positions and questions related to the text evolve as comprehension increases.

HOW?
1. Choose a central text.
2. After students read the text as a class, in small groups or independently, provide students with a value judgment connected to the text.
3. Designate a “value line” in the classroom. Assign one side for those who agree strongly, the other for those who disagree strongly and a space in the middle for those whose opinions lie in between.
4. Ask students to take a stand relative to the value line at the count of three.
5. Invite students to partner with someone who disagrees with their stance and discuss their positions with these questions:
   • Why do you think that?
   • How would you explain that?
   • What’s the evidence to support that?
   • How can you persuade me to think that too?
   • What would you have done in that situation?
6. After individual student discussions, debrief the value judgment as a whole class.
7. Revisit the central text.
8. Ask students to take a stand again, using the same statement. Some students may return to the same location on the value line. Some may change position.
9. Invite students to select a different partner and talk about why they chose the stance they did.
10. Debrief the process again with the whole group, focusing on reasons for keeping or changing position.
11. Have students quick write or draw about the process.
English language learners
Verbal interaction is central to developing language proficiency. Value Line provides students an authentic opportunity for meaningful conversation and verbal interaction in English. Reading and rereading the same text increases reading comprehension for all students.

Connection to anti-bias education
In an anti-bias classroom, each student must feel valued, accepted and validated. Value Line supports rich discussions about divergent opinions and experiences. It enhances understanding and allows students to adjust their thinking in response to additional information. This strategy illustrates how diversity enriches a team.
Write to the Source

POINT OF VIEW (NARRATIVE)

When are identities a burden? After reading The Skin I’m In (Chapter 3), think about how the story it tells/ideas it describes might feel different from the point of view of someone from a different identity group. After brainstorming this topic with a partner or small group, write a [insert writing product] retelling the story or situation from a different speaker’s point of view. Enrich the story by [insert additional task demands].

SUGGESTED WRITING PRODUCTS:
• short story
• short play
• descriptive paragraph
• narrative poem
• comic strip with detailed speech bubbles
• graphic novel
• speech

ADDITIONAL TASK DEMANDS:
• [Mild] …showing (not telling) this speaker’s opinion about what is happening.
• [Medium] …showing (not telling) how this speaker’s identity leads to a slightly different point of view.
• [Spicy] …showing (not telling) how this speaker’s identity leads to a slightly different point of view and way of telling the story.

NARRATIVE WRITING RUBRIC
3-5WTS_Narrative Rubric
Do Something

POETRY AND STORYTELLING CAFE

WHAT?
Students write and share original poems and stories about community issues or themes present in the central text.

ESTIMATED TIME
One week

WHY?
Setting up a cafe is exciting for students and helps build community. Poetry is an accessible and personal genre through which to express ideas and feelings. Oral storytelling brings history and culture to the communication process. This task encourages classroom communities to come together and share writing in a safe, supportive and inspiring space.

HOW?

GET READY
1. Review or explore elements of both storytelling and poetry.
2. Select and read various poems and stories together as a class.
3. Assess student interest in artistic modes of expression. Students may work together individually or in partnerships or small groups, depending on their preferred medium.
4. Make note of literary devices and strategies used to convey ideas and feelings, such as:
   - Descriptive language to help the reader or listener visualize the feeling or message
   - Repetition for emphasis
   - Comparisons such as similes and metaphors
   - Alliteration

GET SET
1. Introduce students to the Do Something Student Planning Guide. Instruct them in mapping the steps necessary to complete poems and stories.
2. Share the sample rubric or adapt it into a checklist for students. Refer to the rubric to define expectations.
3. As a class, generate topics that connect to central text themes.
4. Show students video clips of poetry and storytelling performances.
5. Help students decide whether to write a poem or an original story (fiction or creative nonfiction).
6. Students will work individually on writing but can work with partners to peer review each other’s work.
7. Have students practice telling their stories or reciting their poems aloud.
8. Ask students to provide feedback to each other related to performance elements such as eye contact, expression, delivery clarity and volume.

GO!
1. Students finalize their poems and stories and prepare to perform in the cafe showcase.
2. Decide on the location for the cafe based on your school community, resources and schedule. If possible,
invite families, other grades and community members.

3. Think about creative ways to transform the space into a cafe.
   • Consider mood lighting, tablecloths, flowers for decoration, etc.
   • Consider serving snacks or beverages.
   • Students can help with setup and decorations.
   • Students should be encouraged to show support for each performer.

4. Throughout the showcase, tie poems and stories back to the literacy work being done in class, the central texts and the overall social justice themes.

5. Take photographs of the cafe event, and use them in a digital or paper scrapbook that celebrates the event.

**REFLECT**

STUDENTS CAN JOURNAL ABOUT HOW THEIR POEMS AND STORIES REFLECTED CENTRAL TEXT THEMES.

SOME SUGGESTED REFLECTION QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

• What topic or theme from the central text was included in your poem or story?
• What important message did your poem or story express to your audience?
• How can poems or stories be a form of social action?

**English language learners**

The heavy language focus of this task can be challenging for students learning English, so be sure to check in and scaffold the experience throughout. Graphic organizers can help with the poetry or story-writing process. This project engages linguistic and intrapersonal learning modalities throughout the writing process and the interpersonal modality during the performances.

**Connection to anti-bias education**

Poetry and storytelling are personal, expressive forms of writing that help students develop their voices and convey thoughts, feelings and understandings related to social justice topics. By hearing multiple performances, students can learn from and appreciate other perspectives, a foundational element of an anti-bias curriculum.
Think Aloud Checklist

Place a tally mark in the middle column for every Think Aloud skill or strategy you hear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY OR SKILL</th>
<th>TALLY MARK</th>
<th>CUE WORDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
<td></td>
<td>I got confused when... I’m not sure of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I didn’t expect...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world)</td>
<td></td>
<td>This is like...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This reminds me of...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If it were me...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making predictions</td>
<td></td>
<td>I predict...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In the next part I think...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrating thoughts</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe I’ll read ahead and see if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gets clearer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Why did...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How did...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where was...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting</td>
<td></td>
<td>I think I’ll...next time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I realize that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I wonder if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading</td>
<td></td>
<td>I think I need to read that section again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing for information</td>
<td></td>
<td>I remember reading something about this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipping</td>
<td></td>
<td>I’ll come back to this...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td></td>
<td>I think this is mainly about...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The most important idea is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveying for text features</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bold print, titles, captions, maps,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pictures, photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualizing</td>
<td></td>
<td>I see...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I picture...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAME

Narrative Writing Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>ATTEMPTING 1</th>
<th>PROGRESSING 2</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHING 3</th>
<th>EXCEEDING 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOCUS</td>
<td>Writing is not sufficiently focused on responding to the essential question through narrative.</td>
<td>Writing is somewhat focused on responding to the essential question through narrative.</td>
<td>Writing is focused on responding to the essential question through narrative.</td>
<td>Writing responds creatively or abstractly, but still clearly, to the essential question through narrative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROLLING IDEA</td>
<td>Writing does not express any big ideas.</td>
<td>Writing expresses an idea.</td>
<td>Writing expresses a consistent and clear idea.</td>
<td>Writing subtly or creatively expresses a consistent and clear idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXTUAL EVIDENCE</td>
<td>Writing does not refer to the central text.</td>
<td>Writing refers to the central text in ways that are not accurate or relevant to the essential question.</td>
<td>Writing refers accurately to the central text in ways that are relevant to responding to the essential question.</td>
<td>Writing refers to the central text and uses the text to support a narrative structure that responds creatively to the essential question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>Writing is minimal and does not develop its ideas or narrative structure.</td>
<td>Writing shows weak or unclear development of ideas and narrative structure.</td>
<td>Writing shows strong, clear development of ideas and narrative structure.</td>
<td>Writing shows strong, clear and creative or original ways of developing ideas and narrative structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>Writing is disorganized and difficult to follow.</td>
<td>Writing is organized in a way that does not meet the demands of the task.</td>
<td>Writing is organized to structure the reasoning of the ideas being expressed and meets task demands.</td>
<td>Writing is purposefully and thoughtfully organized to structure and strengthen the ideas being expressed and meets the task demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORD CHOICE</td>
<td>Writing uses only limited vocabulary and incorporates no language from the text.</td>
<td>Writing attempts to incorporate language from the text.</td>
<td>Writing accurately and clearly incorporates varied vocabulary including language from the text.</td>
<td>Writing accurately, clearly and creatively incorporates varied vocabulary including language from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVENTIONS</td>
<td>Writing has frequent errors in usage and mechanics.</td>
<td>Writing has some errors in usage and mechanics.</td>
<td>Writing has few errors in usage or mechanics.</td>
<td>Writing has no errors in usage or mechanics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NARRATIVE WRITER’S CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>STUDENT CHECKLIST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOCUS</td>
<td>Did I focus my narrative on the essential question?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROLLING IDEA</td>
<td>Did I clearly state a main idea or point of view through my narrative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXTUAL EVIDENCE</td>
<td>Did I support the ideas my narrative represents with evidence from the central text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>Did I develop my narrative with creative and relevant ideas and details?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>Did I organize and structure my writing in a way that communicates an effective story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORD CHOICE</td>
<td>Did I use a variety of vocabulary, including language I learned from the text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVENTIONS</td>
<td>Did I edit my writing for spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization?</td>
</tr>
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</table>
# Do Something Student Planning Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO SOMETHING TASK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP/INDIVIDUAL NAME(S)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS TASK?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO ARE POSSIBLE ALLIES?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE OBSTACLES?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT MESSAGE DO YOU WANT YOUR AUDIENCE TO TAKE AWAY?</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW DOES YOUR MESSAGE CONNECT TO THE TEXTS WE READ IN CLASS?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT RESOURCES AND SUPPLIES DO YOU NEED?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT HELP OR SUPPORT DO YOU NEED?</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY DATES</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Poetry and Storytelling Café Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>EMERGING 1</th>
<th>PROGRESSING 2</th>
<th>ACCOMPLISHING 3</th>
<th>EXCEEDING 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTENT</td>
<td>The writing does not convey ideas relevant to topics explored in class.</td>
<td>The writing conveys a surface-level idea relevant to topics explored in class.</td>
<td>The writing conveys ideas relevant to topics explored in class.</td>
<td>The writing strongly conveys ideas relevant to topics explored in class, and integrates outside knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>The work does not reflect effort or care in presentation.</td>
<td>The work reflects some effort and care in presentation.</td>
<td>The work reflects tangible effort and care in presentation.</td>
<td>The work reflects effort attention to detail and care in presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVITY</td>
<td>No evidence of original, creative ideas.</td>
<td>Some evidence of original, creative ideas.</td>
<td>Clear evidence of original, creative ideas throughout the work and in the presentation.</td>
<td>The work includes an array of original, creative ideas, combining topics explored in class with new ideas in novel ways. It is presented with the audience clearly in mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECTION TO THE CENTRAL TEXT</td>
<td>The work does not connect to the central text or its themes in any way.</td>
<td>The work includes a superficial reference to the central text and/or its themes.</td>
<td>The work clearly incorporates the central text and its themes.</td>
<td>The work reflects a deep understanding of the central text and its themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMONSTRATION OF ANTI-BIAS COMPETENCY</td>
<td>Student shows emerging understanding of the expectations in anti-bias standard __________.</td>
<td>Student is progressing toward the expectations in anti-bias standard __________.</td>
<td>Student meets the expectations in anti-bias standard __________.</td>
<td>Student exceeds the expectations in anti-bias standard __________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLABORATION / COOPERATION (OPTIONAL)</td>
<td>Students worked individually.</td>
<td>Students worked together but contributions were unbalanced.</td>
<td>Students worked well together and contributions were balanced.</td>
<td>Students worked very well together; they compromised and built off one another’s ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>