

Grade 5: **Unit 1**

The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963: Connected Text Seminars

Seminar 1: Connected Texts

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars explain the writers' messages about the church bombing in Birmingham and black identity.

Seminar 1:

“Killer of the Innocents” from *Birmingham World* (Nonfiction) and “Black Hair History” from Jazma.com (Nonfiction)

Launch — 2 minutes

- Tell scholars that today, they will be reading two texts: “Killer of the Innocents” and “Black Hair History.” Build excitement by telling scholars that both texts will develop their background knowledge about important concepts in *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Display “Killer of the Innocents.”

Preview the Text (2 minutes):

- Have scholars read the title and scan the passage to frame their thinking.
- Call on scholars to share what they noticed about the text and what they will think about as they are reading.

Read (10 minutes):

- Say: As you are reading, think, *“What is this text mostly about?”*
- Read the text aloud while scholars follow along on their digital copies.

Discuss (3 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What is this text mostly about? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Read (10 minutes):

- Say: *As you are rereading, think, “Why did the author write this text?”*
- Read the text aloud as scholars follow along on their digital copies. While reading aloud, pause to ask the questions below:
 - Stop after paragraph 2.
 - Partner Talk: What descriptive words and phrases does the author use to describe the bombing in paragraphs 1 and 2? What effect do these words have on the reader?
 - Stop after paragraph 7.
 - Partner Talk: Who is the author’s audience? What does he hope to convince his audience of?
 - Stop after paragraph 10.
 - Partner Talk: How does the author’s tone shift after paragraph 7?
 - Discuss: Why did the author write this article?

Main Idea Jot (2 minutes):

- Scholars jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars are working, circulate to determine which scholars have a bull’s-eye main idea jot and which do not.

Discuss (6 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions as a whole class:
 - What is the author’s perspective on the church bombings?
 - How does the author convey his perspective to the reader?

Main Idea Jot (2 minutes):

- Scholars jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars are working, circulate to determine which scholars have a bullseye main idea jot and which do not.

Discuss (6 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions as a whole class:
 - What is the author’s argument regarding nature vs. nurture?
 - How does the author convey his argument to the reader?

Give scholars two minutes to revise their main idea jots based on the discussion.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why did the author entitle this article, “Killer of the Innocents”? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from “Killer of the Innocents.”

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Set your expectations for what scholars must do differently when approaching the next text.

Read and Discuss 2 — 30 minutes

Display “Black Hair History.”

Preview the Text (2 minutes):

- Have scholars read the title and scan the passage to frame their thinking.
- Call on scholars to share what they noticed about the text and what they will think about as they are reading.

Read (10 minutes):

- Say: *As you are reading, think, “What is this text mostly about? Why did the author write this text?”*
- Scholars independently read and annotate the text on their Chromebooks. When they are finished, they jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars work, circulate to determine the major trend in scholars’ work and conference with two to three scholars.

Discuss (5 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What is this text mostly about? Why did the author write this text? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Give scholars two minutes to revise their main idea jots based on the discussion.

Read (6 minutes):

- Say: *As you are rereading, think, “How did European hair care influence black hairstyles?”*
- Reread paragraphs 4–7 with scholars.

Discuss (5 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following question as a whole class: How did European hair care influence black hairstyles?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- According to the article, why was the conk so popular among African American men from the 1920s to the 1960s? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from “Black Hair History.”

Seminar 2: Connected Texts

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars understand the poets’ messages about the church bombing in Birmingham and black identity.

Seminar 2: “Ballad of Birmingham” by Dudley Randall (Poem) and “White Lies” by Natasha Trethewey (Poem)

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday’s seminar based on the feedback you provided.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Tell scholars that today, they will be reading two poems: “Ballad of Birmingham” and “White Lies.” Build excitement by telling scholars that both texts will develop their background knowledge about important concepts in *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Display “Ballad of Birmingham.”

Preview the Text (2 minutes):

- Have scholars read the title and scan the passage to frame their thinking.
- Call on scholars to share what they noticed about the text and what they will think about as they are reading.

Read (5 minutes):

- Say: *As you are reading, think, “What is this text mostly about?”*
- Read the text aloud while scholars follow along on their digital copies.

Discuss (3 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What is this text mostly about? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Read (15 minutes):

- Say: *As you are rereading, think, “Why did the author write this text?”*
- Read the poem aloud as scholars follow along on their digital copies. While reading aloud, pause to ask the questions below:
 - Stop after stanza 4, “...and sing in the children’s choir.”

- Partner Talk: Why doesn't the mother want her child to march in the streets of Birmingham?
 - Stop after stanza 5, "...and white shoes on her feet."
 - Partner Talk: Why does the author contrast the color of the child's skin with a white glove?
 - Stop after stanza 8, "...where are you?"
 - Partner Talk: How does the actual outcome of the poem compare to the mother's expected outcome?
 - Discuss: Why did the author write this poem?

Main Idea Jot (2 minutes):

- Scholars jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars are working, circulate to determine which scholars have a bull's-eye main idea jot and which do not.

Discuss (6 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions as a whole class:
- What is Randall's perspective on the bombing in Birmingham?
- How does Randall convey his perspective to the reader?

Give scholars two minutes to revise their main idea jots based on the discussion.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- The mother of the speaker urges her daughter to go to church instead of the Freedom March. How does the bombing in the church go against what the mother expects? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from "Ballad of Birmingham."

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Set your expectations for what scholars must do differently when approaching the next text.

Read and Discuss 2 — 30 minutes

Display "White Lies."

Preview the Text (2 minutes):

- Have scholars read the title and scan the passage to frame their thinking.
- Call on scholars to share what they noticed about the text and what they will think about as they are reading.

Read (10 minutes):

- Say: *As you are reading, think, “What is this poem mostly about? Why did the author write this poem?”*
- Scholars independently read and annotate the text on their Chromebooks. When they are finished, they jot a main idea in a comment next to the title of the text.
- While scholars work, circulate to determine the major trend in scholars’ work and conference with two to three scholars.

Discuss (5 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What is this poem mostly about? Why did the author write this poem? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Give scholars two minutes to revise their main idea jots based on the discussion.

Read (5 minutes):

- Say: *As you are rereading, think, “What are the speaker’s ‘white lies’?”*
- Reread lines 7–18 with scholars.

Discuss (6 minutes):

- Scholars discuss the following question as a whole class:
 - What are the speaker’s “white lies”?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Based on the title “White Lies,” what is the poet’s message about identity? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from “White Lies.”