

The Political Nuances of Narratives and an Urban Educator's Response

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Abstract

Theorists have begun to explore the ways in which the narratives our children read influence the democratic ideals we wish to impart. In a nation so stratified along both racial and socioeconomic lines and with a long history of various forms of systemic oppression, this issue is particularly relevant to how children in the most inequitable learning environments, situated in the most marginalized communities, come to see and know how to affect social change. This paper interrogates the narrative space of children's literature with particular focus on the American civil rights movement. Drawing from Bell's (2009) story type framework, I conceptualize different story types as integrated pedagogical, philosophical, and curricular extensions that are produced, consumed, and regulated with specific political purposes in mind.

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AS WE MARCH through the second decade of the twenty-first century, researchers have begun to explore the ways democratically grounded literature connects justice to what it means to be an educated person in a democracy. For instance, Bell (2009) investigates the role storytelling plays in either reproducing or challenging the American social, economic, and political status quo. Specifically, by "exploring both the power in stories and the power dynamics around stories," Bell argues that "stories can be a powerful vehicle to connect individual experience with systemic analysis in ways that are perhaps more accessible than abstract analysis alone" (p. 27). Considering the importance of a critically informed citizenry to a healthy democracy, we might therefore conceptualize storytelling as a negotiated space comprising explicit and implicit ideologies that influence the attainment of a robust democratic process. Moreover, for urban educators, it is critical to bear in mind that the health of our democracy, as democratic educational theorists argue, is contingent on the health of our classrooms. Yet, as Kozol (2012) passionately reminds us in *Fire and Ashes*, the health of many of our urban schools is on life support. Within these

urban schools, the literature base is fraught with research concerning not only the influence of curricular decisions on students' school-based engagement but, arguably more important, the impact of curricular decisions on students' civic engagement (Hart & Atkins, 2002; Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Kirshner, Strobel, & Fernandez, 2003). In other words, we might say that the process by which we communicate the evolution of our democracy has a lasting impact on the role urban students play in our democracy.

There are two main aims of this paper: (a) to provide in-service urban educators a conceptual framework from which they can gauge and contextualize the varying representations of specific narratives found within curriculum and amidst the daily experiences of their students, and (b) to provide these same educators

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with standards-based activities that can combat the deleterious effects of certain narrative types.

Throughout this paper, I focus on primary-school language arts classrooms with particular attention to how civil rights literature is represented. I chose the American Civil Rights movement since it defines a period of American history in which the fight for justice and equality had a clear impact on the operation of the American democratic process. I focus on children's literature (primarily grades 3–5) since this time period provides foundational understandings that contribute to what Wiggins and McTighe (2005) refer to as the “prior knowledge” that presupposes the study of the movement during students’ secondary years.

In 2011 the National Assessment of Educational Progress offered an alarming statistic: Only 2% of high school seniors could answer a basic question about the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. While this statistic certainly reveals a high school curriculum that does not enough emphasize the civil rights movement, it also offers an additional space from which to explore the ways students’ prior knowledge might influence later engagement with this same topic. Therefore, it might be helpful to investigate how the primary schools instantiate the narrative types that precede later investigations into democratic movements.

The democratically based suppositions and activities espoused in this paper transcend, in many ways, this paper’s focus on urban schools. Nevertheless, the decision to focus on urban schools is largely in response to the crippling underachievement of far too many students of color situated in urban environments (Corcoran & Evans, 2008; Reardon, 2011; Vigdor & Ludwig, 2008, Milner, 2010) and, concurrently, the ways in which the ideas presented in this paper might improve the achievement of urban students in general. It is my belief that the framework and activities outlined below serve as useful pedagogical devices to empower a subset of students systemically underserved by many of our nation’s schools.

Before advancing to the narrative-based activities that in-service teachers might use to better engage and prepare students for healthy democratic participation, I outline the conceptual framework that undergirds these activities. Furthermore, this framework provides in-service teachers a better lens through which to assess and contextualize the varying representations of specific narratives found within curricula and amid the daily experiences of their students.

Theoretical Framework

For students who are forced to overcome the various opportunity gaps that structure the American social, economic, and educational landscape, narratives have the potential to be a powerful inspiration to reform an inequitable world or to be a repressive instrument to reinforce an unjust status quo. I integrate the work of Bell (2009), who introduced the constructs of stock stories, concealed stories, and resistance stories, with the writings of Banks (2006), who, within his extensive work in the field of multicultural education, conceptualized the notion of additive stories. My aim is

to provide a theoretical framework from which to explore classroom activities that urban educators might employ to inspire more democratic thinking and discourse, which, as I argue, provide the foundation for more active civic engagement.

STOCK STORIES AS TOP-DOWN NARRATIVES

Bell (2009) defined *stock stories* as those told by the dominant group to justify and maintain the status quo. These stories are “passed on through historical and literary documents and celebrated through public rituals, law, the arts, education, and media representations” (p.31). As pertains to literature surrounding the American civil rights movement, one prevalent, though often overlooked, manifestation of a stock story is the top-down narrative. We might consider for a moment the overabundance of texts concerning the role of political and ecclesiastical elites within the movement (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., and Thurgood Marshall). While undeniably inspiring and informative, an imbalance in favor of these narratives may convey an implicitly discouraging version of the movement: specifically, that existing institutions organized the movement, and if we want to make an impact on the world, we must have a certain status before effecting change. This elitist doctrine is a direct affront to the democratic ideals of equal access that permeate social movements. As Dewey (1937) said, which remains a reminder:

The key-note of democracy as a way of life may be expressed, it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of both the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals. (p. 457)

To be clear, I am not suggesting every narrative about a political or ecclesiastical elite is inherently problematic; rather, I am proposing that teachers might do well to consider the ways in which collections of books about the civil rights movement found in their classrooms might give preeminence to individuals of a certain status. In so doing, teachers might be able to make more nuanced decisions regarding what they do and do not include in their classroom libraries, for instance.

STOCK STORIES IN COMMON DISCOURSE

In addition to the top-down narrative, it is essential for educators to note that stock stories can be present within common discourse. A current stock story, which urban students may come across in media representations, might be that of the shiftless “welfare queen” who, despite the “equality of opportunity” that permeates the American social landscape, chooses instead to live on someone else’s dollar. What is interesting about the welfare queen narrative in particular and stock stories in general is that they are often conflated with racist and sexist undertones, which, in this case, denote an alleged message of decrying laziness while promoting an implicit ideology of white male superiority.

CONCEALED STORIES

While stock stories represent the subjugating stories used and transferred through social, textual, and technological mediums, concealed stories represent the redemptive narratives not conveyed through these same channels. Concealed stories exist alongside stock stories, yet their popular understanding is hidden from the mainstream. Concealed stories include silenced narratives from marginalized communities that would, potentially, counterpose stock stories by revealing immanent strengths and potentials of disadvantaged groups.

While the notion of a concealed story is essential for educators to grasp, it is also crucial to understand the extent to which concealed stories exist. Accordingly, I extend the discussion of concealed stories in one direction by presenting a brief empirical exploration of the civil rights collection in one urban school district. The decision to include a brief analysis of data within the theoretical framing of this paper is to buttress our conceptual understanding with an understanding of the degree to which concealed stories exist in many urban environments.

CONCEALED STORIES IN ONE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

I identified a large, Northeast metropolitan school district boasting a relatively diverse student body: 39.3% Hispanic, 29.9% Black, 14.3% White, 14.9% Asian. Using the school district’s online library catalogue, I conducted a keyword search using the phrase, *American civil rights movement*. Since this paper focuses on narratives specific to the elementary school level, I restricted the results accordingly. Results revealed 191 unique titles with 7,939 books in circulation within the district.

I grouped the results in six categories: Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, General, Specific Events, Other Individuals, and Omissions. The General category included overviews of the civil rights movement as well as fictitious accounts set during the movement. The Other Individuals category included biographies of those other than Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks affiliated with the movement. The Specific Events category included stories that focused on a particular issue such as sit-ins or the March on Washington. I omitted books that did not deal specifically with the American civil rights movement (such as books about slavery) as well as books that appeared more than once. I summarize my results in Table 1 below.

The key finding is that, within the district, the combined number of books about Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks is double the number of books about all other individuals affiliated with the movement. While the contributions of King and Parks to the civil rights movement are immeasurable, the sheer relative absence of books about all other individuals indicates a

preponderance of what we now know of as concealed stories. For every story not told about an Angela Davis or a Medger Evers, there is a legacy suppressed and a potential inspiration not ignited. Nevertheless, when previously concealed stories are included within the curriculum, there is an overabundance of what Banks (2006) refers to as “additive stories.”

ADDITIVE STORIES

Banks (2006) describes stories in mainstream curricula or discourse that advance a positive image of people or communities traditionally marginalized without challenging overarching issues of oppression and injustice as additive stories. In dealing specifically with curriculum, Banks (2006) refers to the “additive approach” as “the addition of content, concepts, themes, and perspectives without changing the basic structure, purpose, and characteristics of the dominant curriculum” (p.60).

This approach’s most notable shortcoming is that it often tells the stories of ethnic heroes from a nonthreatening perspective that “fails to address issues of racism, poverty, and oppression” (Banks, 2006, p. 59). Jenks, Lee, and Kanpol (2001) argue that the additive model settles for a kind of “cosmetic multiculturalism— one that allows administrators and teachers to say, ‘We’ve taken care of that issue’ when questioned by activist community groups” (p. 96).

THE SANITIZING NATURE OF ADDITIVE STORIES

In his article aptly entitled “What’s Wrong with the Rosa Parks Myth?,” Kohl (2004) outlines the misperceptions and outright lies promulgated in popular narratives about Parks. These inaccuracies ultimately amount to what Bell (2009) might consider a sanitization of the Parks story. Several of these fallacies include:

- Parks portrayed as a poor and tired old seamstress when, in fact, her work as a seamstress was secondary to her role as a community activist. Indeed, Parks was an active member of the NAACP, as well as its first female member. She also attended Highland Folk School in Tennessee, which was a justice-oriented leadership program that aimed, among other things, to desegregate the south.
- The social environment described as merely separated without accurately delineating the fact that the legal segregation that existed in the South was the direct result of many Southern Whites’ moral corruption and fear.
- The statement that when Parks got on the bus, she sat in the front, when in actuality she sat in the front of the colored section of the bus.

Table 1. Summary of Results: Library Holdings of Large Northeastern School District

	<i>Martin Luther King, Jr.</i>	<i>Rosa Parks</i>	<i>Other Individuals</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>Specific Events</i>	<i>Omissions</i>
Unique Books	52	40	46	29	12	12
Total in Circulation	2,142	1,840	2,043	1,139	537	238

- The idea that King led the boycott that ensued, when the boycott was, in fact, planned by the Women's Political Council, members of the NAACP, and others in the Montgomery community.
- In other words, contrary to popular acclaim, Dr. King became the elected leader to popularize the boycott.

These issues illuminate the extent to which historical narratives can be altered in such subtle ways as to change the inherent meaning and influence that the story can have. Accordingly, "too often, iconic stories of heroic individuals simplify resistance, sanitizing the collective struggles that drive social change, and thus fail to pass on necessary lessons about how social change actually comes about" (Bell, 2009 p. 34). Correctly identifying additive stories can have a substantial effect on how students internalize the values and lessons inherent within the actual lives of people who, at various points, shaped the functioning of our social, economic, and political systems.

RESISTANCE STORIES

In contrast to additive stories, resistance stories can serve as the redemptive response to an obdurate status quo. Resistance stories relate how people combat forms of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, and religious intolerance), challenge the stock stories that support them, and strive for more fair and inclusive social arrangements. According to Bell (2009), these are stories about individuals who have struggled against various forms of oppression, but who have nonetheless been excluded or vilified in dominant historical texts. I include an additional category: individuals who have struggled against various forms of oppression and have been sanitized by dominant texts.

It is true that many of the individuals whose beliefs and pursuits were antithetical to the aims and ideals of the status quo were banned from (e.g., Paul Robeson) or vilified in (e.g., Fred Shuttlesworth) mainstream texts and that the telling of their stories can prove to be a valuable addition to a parched narrative collection. It is also true that certain individuals, whose lives are equally radical and who fight oppression with the same courageous virility, have stories that are told in a more "tolerable" way (i.e., additive stories), which obscures the personal motivations, interpersonal influences, and lasting impact of their lives. If these stories are told in their truest form, sort of a restored additive story, I argue that these can be categorized as resistance stories.

As a function of their thematic aim, resistance stories need not venture into the heroification process by which heroes and heroines are "transformed into pious, perfect creatures without conflicts, pain, credibility, or human interest" (Loewen, 2007, p. 11). Rather, the main focus of these stories can be to present the actual lived experiences of imperfect individuals who, by virtue of courage and ideals, transformed an inequitable status quo into a more just society.

Resistance stories can function as a dynamic type of oppositional expression that contribute to the betterment of democracy

by inspiring readers to become active participants in the democratic process by questioning, and indeed by fighting, various forms of oppression. As an aside, in Appendix A, I have included a list of primary-grade books written about the American civil rights movement that serve as exemplars of resistance stories. This list should not be considered exhaustive; it represents an initial introduction into available resistance narratives.

BUT HOW DO I DO IT?

An obvious concern about addressing instances of stock, concealed, additive, and resistance stories within curriculum pertains to whether or not issues of racism, privilege, and oppression can be taught in the primary grades at all. In a revealing account of her personal attempts to incorporate more true-to-life representations of the civil rights movement into her elementary school classroom, Lyman (1999) argues that it is precisely by facing issues of power, racism, and privilege that democratic ideals are sown:

It is against the backdrop of the fire hoses and the snarling dogs that the Birmingham children found their strength to sing, even as they were hauled off to jail. When Martin Luther King was denied the right to sit in the front of a shoe store or to play with his white friends, the seeds of his leadership were planted. It does not make sense to teach the Civil Rights Movement without teaching about the separate bathrooms and KKK. Furthermore, to do so wouldn't be history. It would be a lie. (p. 6)

I have previously discussed the theoretical composition of four story types while attending to how notions of power, racism, and privilege found within narratives have a direct bearing on the democratic ideals conveyed to urban students. While understanding, precisely, how to identify story types is essential for urban educators, it is necessary to begin a discussion, in the vein of Lyman, as to the practical, on-the-ground responses by which educators might confront stock and additive stories, unearth concealed stories, and build upon resistance stories. I now turn to this task.

Classroom Implications

As educators concerned with empowering historically disenfranchised students, we must remember that curricular reform must be pursued within and despite current educational standards and mandates (Dover, 2010). Teachers must identify and implement effective additions and reforms to their classroom practices in light of the different story types to which their students are exposed. Effectively doing so has broad implications for how children participate in the American democratic process. This section outlines several classroom responses to the identification of each story type. The broad activity-based framework is in Table 2.

STOCK STORIES AND COLLECTIVE NAMING EXERCISES

In collective naming activities, representations of people of color or people from poverty would be brought into class for group discussions on the underlying messages that are promoted within

Table 2. Typology of Story Type Implications

<i>Story Type</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Democratic Participatory Implications for Urban Students</i>	<i>Classroom Response</i>
Stock Story	Stories justify and maintain the status quo. These stories are passed down through historical and literary documents and promulgated through public rituals, law, the arts, education, and media representations.	Welfare queen discourse; movies that essentialize “the other” as villainous and destructive	See themselves as subjugated and disenfranchised; disaffiliates with traditional as well as progressive political practices	Collective naming exercises; Common Core Standards: SL.5.1, SL.5.3, SL.5.5, W.5.1, W.5.1
Concealed Story	Concealed stories are the silenced narratives from marginalized communities that would, potentially, counterpoise stock stories by revealing immanent strengths and potentials.	The absence of civil rights activists who are considered “the other”	Unable to see themselves in the lens of historical process; disaffiliating with traditional as well as progressive political practices	Recovery exercises; Common Core Standards: W.5.7, W.5.3, W.5.9
Additive Story	Stories in mainstream curriculum or discourse that advance a positive image of people and communities who historically and presently have been marginalized without challenging overarching issues of oppression and injustice.	Stories of Martin Luther King, Jr., that portray him as a loving assimilationist; stories of Rosa Parks that portray her as a tired seamstress; resistance stories that maintain an elitist ideology	Involving themselves with more traditional forms of political process; emphasizing on personal responsibility, lack of critical awareness	Comparative exercises; Common Core Standards: W.5.7, W.5.8, W.5.9
Resistance Story	Relate how people resist forms of oppression, challenge the stock stories that support it, and fight for more equal and inclusive social arrangements.	Stories of Rosa Parks that include her background in community activism; stories that focus on the importance of collective action (as opposed to simply heroic individual effort) in affecting social change	Practicing critical awareness; being actively involved in progressive political causes; taking responsibility for actions	Emergent/transforming exercises; Common Core Standards: W.5.3, W.5.4, W.5.5

each narrative. These representations could include stories, songs, advertisements, newspaper articles, etc. Students and teachers could be responsible for bringing in objects. One example might be that the teacher introduces snippets of the Disney movie *Aladdin*. The class could consider how non-American accents function as a stock story device.

Discussion questions might include:

- Who are the “good” people in this movie? Who are the “bad” people?
- Characteristically, what distinguishes the villains (e.g., talk, appearance, demeanor, behavior) from the heroes?
- How does this movie treat non-American accents?
- Why did the producers make these choices?
- How is this movie an example of a stock story?

I outline several potential common core standards associated with collective naming exercises in Table 3.

While these questions are not exhaustive, they should provide parameters from which to create content specific questions for other objects brought into class. In addition to participating in the class discussion, the collective naming exercise, students can be asked to write responses based on representations, summarizing the discussion or discussing additional issues relevant to the discussion. Such exercises provide students an opportunity to learn the social literacy needed to combat stock stories, which is a likely precondition for more engaged democratic participation. I summarize several common core standards relevant to collective naming response writing in Table 4 below.

CONCEALED STORIES AND RECOVERY EXERCISES

Since concealed stories represent the silenced narratives of marginalized communities, teachers can employ various recovery exercises to address the absence of these narratives. In a recovery exercise, students investigate and write about historical figures that a particular course unit did not include. The explicit purpose behind these exercises is to provide students the opportunity to

Table 3. Potential Common Core Standards Used in Collective Naming Exercises

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL.5.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL.5.3: Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL.5.4: Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Table 4. Potential Common Core Standards Used in Collective Naming Response Writing Exercise

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

understand the role of the storyteller in choosing what information to include in a narrative while offering students a practical exercise from which they can learn the historical significance of silenced voices. To ensure that their students' stories are categorized as resistance stories, as opposed to additive stories, teachers can provide a composition template.

I largely base this template on the story structure of *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni, which represents in my mind an ideal example of a resistance story. A sample template is given in Table 5. I offer possible Common core standards used in recovery exercises in Table 6.

ADDITIVE STORIES AND COMPARATIVE EXERCISES

While effectively addressing concealed stories likely includes the creation of recovered resistance stories, dealing with the prevalence of additive stories requires the use of comparative exercises. These exercises expand upon and build students' general knowledge about historical figures as well as improve students' critical understanding of how certain narratives conform to a particular ideology or support the status quo.

Comparative exercises require students to research additional information about certain figures discussed in a textbook unit or chapter. For example, after identifying one historical figure as a class, students could work individually or in groups to research the chosen figure's background, motives, and impact. Teachers might encourage students to search the web, research books in libraries, or interview adults in their communities in search for unpublished aspects of additive stories. Students would then contrast research with one another. Discussions should address the details that were not included in the canon but that came up most often in this

Table 5. Composition Template for Students' Recovery Stories

1. Historical context
2. Family life
3. Work environment and responsibilities
4. Explicit details of types and forms of adversity/oppression
5. Defining moment
Additional individuals who played a role in the accomplishment of defining moment
Historical impact of defining moment

Table 6. Potential Common Core Standards used in Recovery Exercises

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.7: Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

research as well as what details were most distinct. Additionally, the discussion should address why students believe specific details were left out and how the new information changes the way students perceive the examined historical figure.

Within these discussions, it is also important for teachers to bear in mind and encourage students to consider the contingent structure of each participant's perspective. A dialogical conversation is based upon this contingency. Hawes (1999) helps to make this point clear:

Conversing dialogically is to be always already compromised. A dialogical subject's responsibility is to negotiate the will to speak and listen in the face of contingencies that separate essentialized positions from one another and from their animating interests in ways that reproduce the possibilities of dialogue. (p. 3)

To put it differently, a dialogical conversation is a growing awareness of issues of power, privilege, and status and should permit an honest, open, and empathetic communication between and among teachers and students.

Comparative stories, therefore, allow students to refine their understandings while developing a critical lens from which they might more readily question the potential assumptions made by additive stories encountered in the future. I present several common core standards pertinent to Comparative Exercises in Table 7.

Table 7. Potential Common Core Standards Used in Comparative Exercises

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.7: Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.8: Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work and provide a list of sources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

RESISTANCE STORIES AND EMERGING/
TRANSFORMING EXERCISES

With regard to encountering resistance stories, teachers can substantiate a resistance story’s impact by implementing emerging/transforming stories, which are stories that are “deliberately constructed to challenge stock stories. These stories enact continuing critique and resistance to the stock stories, subvert taken-for-granted racial patterns and enable the imagination of new possibilities for an inclusive human community” (Bell, 2009, p. 35). Based on the story of, say, Huey Newton, teachers could prompt students to write their own personalized, fictional account of fighting oppression, contextualizing Newton’s life in modern times. This type of creative writing experience requires students to identify key elements in the identified resistance story and transfer the generalized principles to their daily experiences. This high-order thinking skill likely permits students to internalize many of the transformative qualities inherent within the resistance story while offering them a creative space for a counternarrative. I present potential common core standards associated with emerging/transforming exercises in Table 8.

In a world full of stock stories and a curriculum often rife with additive stories, resistance stories are often the most difficult to uncover; yet, when they are identified, teachers should be prepared to build upon the democratic principles inherent within resistance stories. Accordingly, emerging/transforming stories might provide one possible path by which teachers can do just that. Like all of the aforementioned exercises, this activity should be seen as one of many possibilities that a teacher, who is committed to the empowerment of his or her students, might implement.

Summary

As I have argued throughout this paper, urban educators must be explicit in naming various story types while encouraging students to develop critical habits of the mind as they learn “to participate in and contribute to a democratic society by developing both the skill and inclination for civic engagement” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p.159). A foundational element of this civic engagement, as I have argued, is the ability to adequately define and respond to the narrative types described. Resistance stories are the most straightforward story type for confronting and altering issues of oppression and, likely, inspiring social change. Activities and exercises can be used to build upon the democratizing potential of resistance stories

Table 8. Potential Common Core Standards Used in Emerging/Transforming Exercises

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.5.5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

while combating the deleterious social, psychological, and political effects of stock, concealed, and additive stories. In light of these activities and exercises, the fight for democracy need not interfere with Common Core State Standards. Indeed, for an urban educator, the very process of identifying and challenging existing forms of narratives may create a more informed and engaged classroom of students who can rewrite their own stories.

Appendix A: References for Elementary-Level Resistance Stories

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