The Little Rock 9
Middle School, Grades 7, 8
Spring 2012

Project READi Curriculum Module
Technical Report CM #13

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Project READI operated as a multi-institution collaboration among the Learning Sciences Research Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago; Northern Illinois University; Northwestern University; WestEd’s Strategic Literacy Initiative; and Inquirium, LLC. Project READI developed and researched interventions in collaboration with classroom teachers that were designed to improve reading comprehension through argumentation from multiple sources in literature, history, and the sciences appropriate for adolescent learners. Curriculum materials in the READI modules were developed based on enacted instruction and are intended as case examples of the READI approach to deep and meaningful disciplinary literacy and learning.

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The Little Rock 9
Middle School Unit
Project READI 2012
THINK-WRITE

Thinking about how people work and talk together can help teams work smoothly.

- Think about a time when you were talking with someone who really made you feel listened to.
- Write notes about what that person did or said to show they were listening and paying attention to you.

PAIRS

Talking about how people work and talk can help teams work smoothly.

- Take turns talking about things people do to listen, talk and work well together.
- Write notes about your ideas to share with the whole class.
WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION

• Share some ideas about things people can do to help you feel listened to.
• Make notes about other people’s ideas.

“Solar” is one easy way to remember some things that good listeners do. Make notes below about what SOLAR stands for.
INDIVIDUAL THINK-WRITE

Silently read the three questions below. Then, write notes on this page about your thoughts, any connections you make to what you know and questions you have.

When have you felt mistreated because of .....

- the way you look?
- the way you dress?
- the way you speak?
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

PAIRS TALK

Take turns listening and sharing your ideas:

• **Speaker:** Show your partner your notes and discuss your thoughts, any connections you make to what you know and questions you have.

• **Listener:** Listen silently and add notes about your partner’s thinking to your own notes. When the speaker is done, tell your partner one thing that was interesting or that you had a question about.

• **Switch** listening and speaking roles when the teacher calls time.

WHOLE CLASS

Contribute to the class discussion:

• Tell the class about an idea you or your partner discussed.

• Add notes about the class discussion to your notes.
Use the Think Aloud Checklist on the following page as you listen to your teacher. Think aloud as she reads the following text.

“I wanted to go [to Little Rock Central High School] because [students at Central] had more privileges. They had more equipment; they had five floors of opportunity. From the time I was two, my mother said, ‘You will go to college. Education is your key to survival.’ I did not have an overwhelming desire to integrate this school and change history. Oh no. There was none of that.”

--Melba Pattillo Beals
THINKING ALOUD ABOUT THE LITTLE ROCK NINE

Make checkmarks next to strategies you hear your teacher use while thinking aloud

THINK ALOUD CHECKLIST

Setting Purposes
- I’m interested in ...
- I want to figure out ...

Questioning
- I wonder why/ how/ if...
- Could this mean ...

Predicting
- I think the next part will ...

Picturing
- I can picture/ imagine/ see ...

Making Connections
- I already knew ...
- This reminds me of...

Identifying Roadblocks
- I’m confused about ...
- I need to know more about ...

Summarizing
- This is about ...
- The big idea here is ...

Using Fix-Ups
- I’ll re-read this
- I’ll mark this and come back
HOW WE READ

WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION

• Use this to help you remember to pause and think about reading.

THINK ALOUD BOOKMARK

Setting Purposes

- I’m interested in …
- I want to figure out …

Questioning

- I wonder why/ how/ if…
- Could this mean …

Predicting

- I think the next part will …

Using visuals

- I can picture/ imagine/ see …
- This visual explains…

Making Connections

- I already knew …
- This reminds me of…

Identifying Roadblocks

- I’m confused about …
- I need to know more about …

Using Fix-Ups

- I’ll re-read this
- I’ll mark this and come back

Summarizing

- This is about …
The big idea here is ...

As you read the following story, jot down notes, questions, ideas, or comments that come to mind. Make note of any unfamiliar words or phrases you hear or see.

Melba Pattillo Beals was a junior when she entered the all white Little Rock Central High School with eight other African American students in the fall of 1957 and became one of The Little Rock 9. Her entry into the school put to the test a Supreme Court decision (Brown vs. Board of Education, 1954) that called for an end to schooling that was “separate but equal.” This term “separate but equal” refers to an 1868 Supreme Court decision, called Plessy vs. Ferguson, in which the justices said that the races could be separated for all activities as long as facilities and services were equal. As a result of this ruling, segregation of the races became legal. Whites and African-Americans lived in different areas of town, drank from different water fountains, rode in different seats on the bus, and attended different schools. Segregation was legal, but it often meant that African Americans lived with less. African Americans also lived without basic rights like freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, equal voting rights, and equal protection under the law. African Americans did not have the backing of the government. However, they did have the backing of groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), who argued for their rights. These groups started the movement in the 1950’s and 1960’s to integrate blacks into white society. This movement led to the Brown vs. Board of Education decision to integrate public schools.
Because of this decision, white schools were no longer permitted, by federal law to deny entry to any student because of race. States were ordered to begin integration “with all deliberate speed.” Little Rock Central High School administrators came up with a proposal to follow that order, but acting on the proposal proved to be so difficult that Little Rock Central High School, the Little Rock 9, the Governor, and the entire state of Arkansas became the focus of national attention. The attempt to integrate Little Rock Central High School involved a clash of legal systems, political decisions, and social beliefs and actions. To understand what happened to the Little Rock 9 is to get a glimpse into an entire era (fifties—early sixties) of the struggle for Civil Rights—an era that focused on integration of African-Americans into mainstream white society.
PAIRS TALK

Take turns listening and sharing your ideas:

- **Speaker**: Show your partner your notes and discuss your thoughts, any connections you make to what you know and questions you have.
- **Listener**: Listen silently and add notes about your partner’s thinking to your own notes. When the speaker is done, tell your partner one thing that was interesting or that you had a question about.
- **Switch** listening and speaking roles when the teacher calls time.

WHOLE CLASS

Contribute to the class discussion:

- Tell the class about an idea you or your partner discussed.
- Add notes about the class discussion to your notes.
- Discuss the strategies you used to make sense of the text. Add any new strategies to your checklist.
ACTIVITY 1 – WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS?

THINK ALOUD MODEL

Listen to your teacher’s thoughts, questions, and connections and make notes on the photos about what you notice.

Photo 1
Photo 4
PAIRS TALK

Take turns listening and sharing your ideas:

• **Speaker:** Show your partner your notes and discuss your thoughts, any connections you make to what you know and questions you have.

• **Listener:** Listen silently and add notes about your partner’s thinking to your own notes. When the speaker is done, tell your partner one thing that was interesting or that you had a question about.

• **Switch** listening and speaking roles when the teacher calls time.

WHOLE CLASS

Contribute to the class discussion:

• Tell the class about an idea you or your partner discussed.

• Add notes about the class discussion to your notes.

• The following chart could be constructed together as part of this discussion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHOTO</th>
<th>OBSERVATION</th>
<th>INFERENCES</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>PHOTO</td>
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ACTIVITY 2 - THE LITTLE ROCK 9 - CENTRAL QUESTION

Historians argue about how successful the attempt to integrate Little Rock Central High School was, and they have different interpretations of all of the tactics and obstacles—legal, social, and political—that played into that success or lack of it.

Silently read the unit’s central question below. Then write notes on this page about your thoughts, questions you have, and words you may not understand.

What obstacles existed for those trying to desegregate Little Rock Central High School and how effective were their tactics to overcome those obstacles?
PAIRS TALK
Take turns listening and sharing your ideas. Note your ideas.

WHOLE CLASS
Contribute to the class discussion and note new ideas.
**ACTIVITY 3 – A BRIEF HISTORY UP TO 1957**

**Write Now!**

What are we learning about reading a photograph to understand history?
Timeline Activity

In order to build a narrative for the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, we are going to construct a timeline from what you already know about African American History.

Think about events or famous African Americans you could include on a timeline of African American history. In your small group, brainstorm a list of ideas to be ready to share out. Note your ideas here
The 1957-1958 School Year

ACTIVITY 3 – A BRIEF HISTORY UP TO 1957

Laws known as “Jim Crow” laws affected the lives of millions of people. Named after a popular minstrel song that stereotyped African Americans, "Jim Crow" came to stand for a system of government which supported and upheld racial segregation in the United States. There were eighteen Jim Crow laws recorded in the United States between 1866 and 1959. Five of these laws appear below. Read each one and annotate. Be ready to share with your small group.

1866: Education [Statute]
No Negro or mulatto would be allowed to attend any public school except one reserved for "colored persons."

1884: Miscegenation [State Code]
All marriages of white persons with Negroes or mulattoes declared illegal.

1921: Miscegenation [Statute]
Prohibits cohabitation between whites and blacks and defines the term "Negro" as any person who has any Negro blood in his veins.
1947: Voting rights [Statute]
Required voters to pay poll tax.

1957: Public Carrier [Statute]
Required segregation on all public carriers.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION
Take turns listening and sharing your ideas. Note your ideas.

WHOLE CLASS
Contribute to the class discussion. Note any new ideas.
Individual Think-Write
Silently read the two questions below. Then, write notes on this page about your thoughts, what you know and questions you have.

• What if anything do you know about desegregation?
• How has segregation and/or desegregation affected you, your neighborhood or your community?
• What are your experiences with segregation and/or desegregation?
PAIRS TALK
Take turns listening and sharing your ideas. Note your ideas.

WHOLE CLASS
Contribute to the class discussion and note new ideas.
ACTIVITY 4 – SCHOOLS

Make notes about your thoughts, questions, and connections about the photograph below.

PAIRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHOTO</th>
<th>OBSERVATION</th>
<th>INFERENCES</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
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FOURS – Share with another pair. Add any new information and/or change information. Decide what to share out in whole group.
The Little Rock Nine

Think about what you have learned about those trying to desegregate Little Rock Central High School. Answer the questions below. You can use your Interactive Notebook, texts, and notes to help.

1. What do you think the biggest obstacle was? What is your evidence?

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2. What was the most effective tactic? What is your evidence?

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Post-Assessment: Civil Rights

You have been reading about the Little Rock Nine, who integrated Central High School in 1957. Here is another text to read. This is about Ruby Nell Bridges, a six-year old who helped integrate an all-white elementary school in New Orleans. It is connected in a number of ways to what you have just been learning about the Little Rock Nine. When you read this text, think about those connections. You may annotate the text or take notes. After reading the text, you will answer some questions.

Ruby Bridges

Problem We All Live With, ca. 1973, by Norman Rockwell.

(source: The Ruby Bridges Foundation, as first published in Guideposts, March 2000)

In 1960, Ruby Nell Bridges entered William Frantz Public School in New Orleans. She was the first African-American student to attend a formerly all-white elementary school. Born in Mississippi in 1954, Bridges moved from a farm to the city of New Orleans so that her parents could support their growing family.

By the time Bridges got ready to enter school, the city of New Orleans was ordered to desegregate in 1960. A test was given to African-American students. Those who passed would go to formerly all-white schools. Bridges passed the test and was selected to enter first-grade at William Frantz Public School. Bridges’ mother supported this decision and saw it as an opportunity for a better education. However, her father thought they were “asking for trouble.” In the end, after much prayer and discussion, Bridges’ parents sent her to school. Her mother felt that she would be opening the door for many other African-American children.

On November 14, 1960, Bridges and five other African-American students were scheduled to enter the public schools in New Orleans. However, two decided to stay in their own schools and three were assigned to another school. Bridges would enter William Frantz alone. Federal marshals drove Bridges and her
mother to school on November 14, 1960. On the way, the marshals explained how they would walk into the school - two in front of her and two behind. Her mother reminded her, “Ruby Nell...don’t be afraid. There might be some people upset outside, but I’ll be with you.”

Ignoring the shouts of the crowd gathered outside, Bridges entered the school and spent the whole day sitting in the principal’s office. She never got to her classroom because of the noise! On the second day of school, Bridges was driven to school with her mother and met her new teacher - Ms. Henry from Boston. Bridges admitted not knowing how to react to a white woman as a teacher since she had never had one before. In her second-floor classroom, Bridges began learning her alphabet. The third day of school, Bridges’ mother stayed home to go to work and look after her siblings. Her mother reminded her to pray and that she would be taken care of on the way to school.

Bridges prayed on her way to school and felt that this was her protection from people who yelled at her. After getting through the angry crowd, she was happily greeted by Ms. Henry, who sat Bridges near her desk and worked with her every day. Meanwhile, riots and protests shook the streets of New Orleans. Her family suffered as a result of attendance at William Frantz. Bridges’ father was fired and the family could not shop at stores that they had been patrons of before desegregation. Her grandparents were asked to move from their farm in Mississippi.

Despite this, there were people who sent letters of support to Bridges and her family. A neighbor gave Bridges’ father a job and other people babysat for her mother. Some people protected her as she rode to school in the federal marshals’ car. The Bridges’ commend those families who helped them and Ruby Bridges said that her favorite was Ms. Henry - who sat next to her and played with Bridges at recess since she could not go out onto the playground.

Bridges says that through Ms. Henry and the lessons of Martin Luther King, Jr., she learned never to judge people by the color of their skin since people are all made different. She also points to Dr. Robert Coles, a child psychiatrist, who helped her through the mob each day and talked to her about how her school days were going.

When Bridges returned to school the following year, Ms. Henry was gone - she had been asked not to return. There were a few more African-American students in attendance at William Frantz Public School and she did not have to be walked into class under the watch of federal marshals. Several years later, Bridges finished grade school at William Frantz and went to an integrated high school. Bridges then went to business school and became a travel agent. As an adult, Bridges married and now raises four sons. Today, she volunteers at William Frantz Public School and supported Dr. Coles in his writing of a book about her. In addition, the famed artist, Norman Rockwell, painted *Problem We All Live With*
in 1973 that showed Bridges being escorted into school. This painting gained international fame. In 1995, Bridges reunited with Ms. Henry. Both began to speak across the country about integration, race relations, and how we can learn from lessons of the past.

Answer the following questions about the Ruby Bridges you just read.

1. How is the story of Ruby Bridges connected to the story of the Little Rock Nine? You can list your ideas if you would like.

2. What kind of information, political, social, or legal, does the Ruby Bridges story contain? List an example of that kind of information.
3. What information was new or surprising to you?

4. Can you trust the information in this story? How do you know if you can trust it or not?
5. What does a historian have to do before he can write a text about an event in history?