Thematic Unit—Guiding Questions

- **Aim for students to:**
  - Explore idea of conformity in society
  - Analyze propaganda in the media

- **Questions for students to consider throughout the unit**
  - Is human nature controllable?
  - Are human beings capable of resisting societal pressure?
  - Do good people commit atrocities?

- Students will decide the answers to the questions by reading young adult literature in literature circles
Overview of “Rebelling Against Conformity”

- **Final Project—Character March**
  - Students will create a march lead by a character in their book
  - They are required to produce a piece of propaganda, a national anthem and a symbol for the dystopia in their book
  - Students will present at the end of the unit

- **Scaffolding Projects**
  - Use of literature circles to brainstorm project ideas, and experiment with each type of writing in class and as homework
US Student Teaching: The Classroom

- Taught in a urban school in Dayton
- Excellent experience in a city school
  - Most of the English department seemed invested in the education of their students, and super knowledgeable about the content
  - Administration supportive of teachers and students alike
- I taught lower level seniors—neither of which I had ever taught
  - Made me think constantly on how to breakdown difficult texts into manageable parts
  - Always considered, “How will these students use this information in the rest of their lives?”
US Student Teaching: On the Brightside

- **Classroom organization**
  - I learned more from my CT about how to organize a classroom and keep up with grades, and paperwork.
  - Appreciated how she organized her online grade book with standards and student grades so parents could see what their kids were learning.
  - Observed how she communicated with parents, and how she tracked this communication—useful for my future career!!!

- **Professional Development**
  - I learned how to work professionally and successfully alongside someone who I didn’t always agree with, and still managed to take things away from it.
US Student Teaching: Trials

Marked by Frustrations

- Had the earnest desire to engage the students with new types of activities, yet I was stuck by my CT to teach to question and answer worksheets
  - Limited my interaction with students, and their interaction with the texts
- Thus far, I have not had the chance to really experiment with the lessons I’ve created in my Thematic Unit—I hope to implement more during Winter Quarter
  - Would have liked the opportunity to see if some of the more interactive activities would have made an impact on these lower level Seniors
- Did have two or three successful lessons where I mixed my teaching style with those of my CT
  - I realized there is some value to explaining things to students, and even more value in letting them discover on their own—that’s a time and a place for both
Looking Back

- I realized the more important than figure out what works and what doesn’t in a lesson, is figuring out what type of teacher
  - I really am appreciative of the fact that I had time to make mistakes underneath another person’s guidance, and with that had time to consider what I wanted MY classroom to look like

- Sources of Depression: Don’t take it personally
  - I spent so much time worrying about how my teaching was affecting the students’ future, when I could really only do what I was asked
  - I did make attempts to offer new ideas to my CT which weren’t as well received as I wanted
  - Had to keep in mind that I was a guest in her classroom and not fret that my CT had different teaching mantras
French Student Teaching

- **ILA vs. EFL**
  - I was forced to consider how my language worked and what was the best way to communicate that to the students.

- **Responsibilities**
  - At school three days a week: Monday morning, Tuesday all day, and Friday.
  - I only created one whole unit, but also adapted lessons my CT created to the students needs, to WSU teaching standards, and to make learning English more interesting.
French Lessons

Lesson organization

- Oral Control—A student stands before the class and tells what they learned in the previous lesson.

- Analyze a Document—Either in groups or individually, students analyze a document (film clip, newspaper clip, book excerpt, advertisement, etc) for: topic, audience, type of document, goals or aims, and make a conclusion about the doc.

- Grammar/Pronunciation Practice—Teacher chooses key grammar aspects from the document the class is working on and has the students practice making sentences as a large group.
  
  Example: Teacher: Based on the picture what do you think the document is about? Student: Considering the picture in my opinion the doc is about....

  *Grammar concept underlined
Lesson Organization (continued)

Writing the Lesson Formal—Summary of what the students worked on in class

Example: The document *Deep Impact* describes the effects/problems of global warming/climate change on the Earth’s environment. Based on the document, we think there might be more floods, hurricanes, and diseases, and fewer/less animals and ice in the arctic. Maybe this document was written to raise awareness/tell people about how bad climate change is for everyone in the world. We think talk we could perhaps use this information to inspire/influence other students/our classmates to work to prevent/stop climate change. It is important for people to know this information because we all live on the Earth.
Going Green!

- Created a thematic unit on the environment for the technical students
  - Used YouTube clips, Inconvenient Truth Advertisement, and other documents for students to learn vocabulary
- Final Project: Create a film or podcast to raise awareness at your school for global warming
- Goals of the unit
  - Teach students vocabulary for discussing global warming and climate change
  - Improve students’ critical thinking skills for awareness campaigns
  - Students to mindfully consider how their school could Go Green
Amazing experience to team teach

- I adapted many lessons to the French style of teaching, and had the opportunity to plan and teach alongside a French certified English teacher.
  - Really wished students always had the opportunity to work with two teachers because then they get more personal attention, and I especially could better assess where each of the students were.
  - Used some of the brainstorming and revision lessons with one class with mixed success.
    - It did get them thinking, but at the time when I did the brainstorming, they didn’t have enough vocabulary on the topic to elaborate.
- Enjoyed how she attempted to use documents that would spark the students’ interest which mixed learning language with learning about the culture as well.
Looking Back—More French Thoughts

- Enjoyed the fresh perspective from a cultural and professional perspective
  - My CT was energetic and did whatever she could to engage students and make the material accessible
  - Goal of almost every French lesson is critical thinking plus language acquisition, whereas at home it is extremely difficult to get students to think critically
- Had successes and failures with both types of lesson formats
  - At first it was difficult for me to teach the way the French do, but by the end of the program I really appreciate how they organize their lessons
- Students were fantastic to work with
  - Even though most of them were required to have another foreign language, most students were genuinely excited about learning English—which made it fun for all parties!
Going Forward—Implications for Future Teaching

- **Action Research in the classroom**
  - I realized in France by the time I understood how the students’ learned, it was time for me to leave
    - I want to make sure my assessments early on in the year help me understand each of my students
  - I honestly want to become a better teacher, and while observations are great, they only tell you about one day
    - Most important are the things that happen daily in your classroom that you don’t often notice
    - I especially want to work on ways to make my classroom more student friendly

- **Reflections—teacher’s journal**
  - One of the best things I can do for myself is take time after each class and at the end of the day and write what happened
    - Can analyze some strengths and weaknesses too
Classroom Management

- Always will be something to improve upon, but not something to stay terrified of for the whole first year of teaching.
- I will take things from both of my student teaching experiences, and from my own trial and error to make a classroom that works for everyone.

Try, try, again

- I will strive to never give up on myself or my students and if something doesn’t work, I need to figure out why and then try something else.
- Flexibility in teaching really is the key to happiness!!