Description
Jacques Derrida wrote that archives are “a token of the future.” Students will keep this concept in mind while reading Julia Alvarez’s literary nonfiction novel *In the Time of the Butterflies* and creating their own product that archives an account connected to the legacy of their own family, heritage, or ancestry.

*In the Time of the Butterflies* examines the lives of “Las Mariposas,” the rebellious Mirabal sisters who lived during Rafael Trujillo’s regime in the Dominican Republic. Three of the four sisters were brutally murdered and became symbols for feminist political resistance. Alvarez’s parents left the island weeks before the Mirabal sisters were assassinated in 1960. Narrated by the surviving sister, Dedé, *In the Time of the Butterflies* examines the Mirabal sisters’ impact on the past and present, and how, for Alvarez, they serve as “a token of the future.”

Over the course of six weeks (14-15 90-minute block periods), students will read and use Alvarez’s published novel, select artifacts from her original research, and primary source documents as a model for their own inquiries and process of archiving the legacy of their family, heritage, and/or ancestry. As they assess the legacy their ancestors have left for them, students will also consider the personal legacies they’re creating as they live and archive their daily lives.

Objectives
Students will use primary source documents, secondary source documents, and a keystone text as a model for the research process and emulate the process of crafting a work of literary nonfiction. Specifically, they will

- Engage in the research process by using primary source documents, determining the reliability of sources, creating an annotated bibliography, synthesizing information gathered, and creating a final product, including works cited page, that will be published and/or showcased at the end of the unit.
- Depending on the media of their final product,
  - Develop personal strengths through creating a final product that engages personal interests in various forms of writing, film, art, etc.
  - Use conscious choices as a director and producer of a film that utilizes characterization, organization, lighting, costuming, sound, and editing.
- Develop their writing skills as an author of a written work by following the writing process from the drafting stage, editing stage, revising stage, and publication stage.

Enduring Understanding(s) & Essential Questions
1. Because they preserve the culture, history, and identity of a people, stories about the past enable contemporary readers to better understand the present.
   a. What functions do stories serve?
   b. How do stories play a role in preserving something for the future? What do stories about the past teach today’s readers? And readers of future generations?
c. How do stories about a society’s or people’s past help readers better understand present day society?

d. How does the legacy left by one’s ancestors affect and shape the way one leaves one’s legacy for others?

e. What is the story that you are crafting through the artifacts of your life (your various electronic posts, collected papers/cards, etc.)?

2. Effective writers of stories based on historical events commit to extensive research of their topics during the writing process in order to craft an authentic, unique text.
   a. Why and how do authors engage in the research process?
   b. How does one assess the reliability of a document found during research?
   c. In what ways do writers and artists use research to craft a final product?
   d. What kinds of materials do authors use to validate the historical accuracy of their own work?

3. Writers use elements of craft such as diction, imagery, details, dialogue, language, and syntax to convey an appropriate mood and tone.
   a. What is the definition of ‘mood’? And of ‘tone’?
   b. In what way(s) are mood and tone connected?
   c. Upon comparing early drafts of In the Time of the Butterflies and the finished book, in what ways does Julia Alvarez utilize revision to help alter the mood or tone of a certain scene?

4. Because the audience influences the style choices a writer employs to impart her text’s meaning or message, effective writers keep an intended audience in mind when crafting a text.
   a. What is the relationship between purpose, genre, and audience?
   b. How does one medium affect an audience compared to various other media choices?
   c. In what ways might an author determine which medium to use when conveying a message?
   d. What role does organization play when conveying a message to an intended audience using a certain medium?
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (Target standards)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>(5)</td>
<td>Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to: (A) analyze non-linear plot development (e.g., flashbacks, foreshadowing, sub-plots, parallel plot structures) and compare it to linear plot development; (B) analyze how authors develop complex yet believable characters in works of fiction through a range of literary devices, including character foils; (C) analyze the way in which a work of fiction is shaped by the narrator's point of view.</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Literary Nonfiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze how literary essays interweave personal examples and ideas with factual information to explain, present a perspective, or describe a situation or event.</td>
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<td>(8)</td>
<td>Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the controlling idea and specific purpose of an expository text and distinguish the most important from the less important details that support the author's purpose.</td>
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<td>(12)</td>
<td>Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to: (A) compare and contrast how events are presented and information is communicated by visual images (e.g., graphic art, illustrations, news photographs) versus non-visual texts; (B) analyze how messages in media are conveyed through visual and sound techniques (e.g., editing, reaction shots, sequencing, background music); (C) compare and contrast coverage of the same event in various media (e.g., newspapers, television, documentaries, blogs, Internet).</td>
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<td>(13)</td>
<td>Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to: (A) plan a first draft by selecting the correct genre for conveying the intended meaning to multiple audiences, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea; (B) structure ideas in a sustained and persuasive way (e.g., using outlines, note taking, graphic organizers, lists) and develop drafts in timed and open-ended situations that include transitions and the rhetorical devices used to convey meaning; (C) revise drafts to improve style, word choice, figurative language, sentence variety, and subtlety of meaning after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed; (D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and</td>
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(E) revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.

(14) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are responsible for at least two forms of literary writing. Students are expected to:
(A) write an engaging story with a well-developed conflict and resolution, interesting and believable characters, and a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense) and devices to enhance the plot;
(B) write a poem using a variety of poetic techniques (e.g., structural elements, figurative language) and a variety of poetic forms (e.g., sonnets, ballads); and
(C) write a script with an explicit or implicit theme and details that contribute to a definite mood or tone.

(15) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:
(C) write an interpretative response to an expository or a literary text (e.g., essay or review) that:
   (i) extends beyond a summary and literal analysis;
   (ii) addresses the writing skills for an analytical essay and provides evidence from the text using embedded quotations; and
   (iii) analyzes the aesthetic effects of an author’s use of stylistic or rhetorical devices; and
(D) produce a multimedia presentation (e.g., documentary, class newspaper, docudrama, infomercial, visual or textual parodies, theatrical production) with graphics, images, and sound that conveys a distinctive point of view and appeals to a specific audience.

(20) Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. Students are expected to:
(A) brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic; and
(B) formulate a plan for engaging in research on a complex, multi-faceted topic.

(21) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:
(A) follow the research plan to compile data from authoritative sources in a manner that identifies the major issues and debates within the field of inquiry;
(B) organize information gathered from multiple sources to create a variety of graphics and forms (e.g., notes, learning logs); and
(C) paraphrase, summarize, quote, and accurately cite all researched information according to a standard format (e.g., author, title, page number).

(22) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:
(A) modify the major research question as necessary to refocus the research plan;
(B) evaluate the relevance of information to the topic and determine the reliability, validity, and accuracy of sources (including Internet sources) by examining their authority and objectivity; and
(C) critique the research process at each step to implement changes as the need occurs and is identified.

(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and
present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims;
(B) provides an analysis for the audience that reflects a logical progression of ideas and a clearly stated point of view;
(C) uses graphics and illustrations to help explain concepts where appropriate;
(D) uses a variety of evaluative tools (e.g., self-made rubrics, peer reviews, teacher and expert evaluations) to examine the quality of the research; and
(E) uses a style manual (e.g., Modern Language Association, Chicago Manual of Style) to document sources and format written materials.

Vocabulary

- Archive
- Database
- Preservation
- Cultural heritage
- Primary source
- Secondary source
- Reliable/Credible source
- Research
- Synthesis
- Annotated bibliography
- MLA Formatting
- Citation
- Literary Nonfiction

Time Required

These foundational inquiry-based research lessons require three 90-minute block periods that are spaced out across six instructional weeks.

Note: In between each lesson, we have outlined “next steps” (denoted by an asterisk) for the teacher to take in order to facilitate this unit in a traditional classroom.

Materials Required

- Print or electronic copies of the following works by Julia Alvarez
  o *In the Time of the Butterflies* (book)
  o “Chasing the Butterflies” (essay) *
  o “Why I Write” (poem) *
- Writer’s Notebooks or another place to record reflections
- Print copies of the “Jigsaw Research Activity” and the three coordinating “Creating and Leaving a Legacy” handouts—1) Project & Rubric, 2) Final Project Product Proposal, and 3) Research Annotated Bibliography.
- Class sets of printed copies of or electronic access to
  o Each of five “Jigsaw Activity, Folder Materials” documents *
  o “Outline Dominican Republic, brief history” *
  o “Outline Novel Chapters, Alvarez” *
It will prove most beneficial for students to have recently finished a unit focused on nonfiction readings prior to beginning this unit on *In the Time of the Butterflies*.

**Note:** To comply with the Fair Use provision of U. S. Copyright law, all of the printed copies of this material from the HRC archive must remain in the classroom. In the event that a teacher alternatively provides online access to the various PDFs due to printing constraints, the materials may instead be posted in a secure, password-protected electronic environment, but only for the lesson day(s) during which they're in use.

**LESSON 1**

**Engage**

10 minutes

Introduction To Archives & Jigsaw Activity

- Ask students to answer the following quick-write/bell-ringer questions independently in their Writer's Notebooks:
  1. *What is a legacy?*
  2. *What do you do with the legacy left by your ancestors?*
  3. *How does the legacy left by your ancestors affect or shape the way you think of leaving a legacy for others?*
  4. *What is an archive and what purpose does it serve?*
- After writing their responses, students will share their responses in small groups.
  - As an extension question, students may also discuss the answer to the following question: *What is an intriguing or striking story about your family? What interesting legacy or history are you part of that you would like to share with your small group?*

**Introduce & Explore**

10-15 minutes

Facilitate a discussion about what an archive is and its importance in preserving culture and the humanities by showing students the mission statement and values of the Harry Ransom Center.

Pass out copies of “Chasing Butterflies” by Julia Alvarez and ask students to share in reading the essay to gain background knowledge about Alvarez’s experiences as an author and connections to / interest in the Mirabal sisters.

**Explain**

5-10 minutes

Provide copies of the “Jigsaw Activity” handout, split students into five groups, and explain the day’s assignment.
- Each group will receive a folder of primary and/or secondary source documents from Julia Alvarez’s archived works housed at the Harry Ransom Center. The “Jigsaw Activity Folders” are as follows:
• Folder 1: Fashion
• Folder 2: 1960 Newspaper Clippings
• Folder 3: Chronological Dates
• Folder 4: Dedé Planning Papers
• Folder 5: Mirabal Sisters’ Legacy

• Students will work in groups to
  o Examine the research material in their assigned folder and answer questions on their individual copies of the “Jigsaw” handout.
  o Synthesize their findings onto a large poster that they’ll use to teach the other groups about the material they examined.
    ⇒ The posters should reflect key ideas from groups’ research and hypothesize possible uses for such documents.
    ⇒ Posters will be displayed in- or outside the classroom to validate the importance of the research process and for use as a reference.

Apply & Elaborate
50 minutes

• Groups will complete the assignment following the instructions provided. (~30 minutes)
• Each group will teach their classmates about their findings using the poster they just created. (~20 minutes)

Evaluate
10-15 minutes

• Facilitate a discussion about the research process and the specific materials found in Julia Alvarez’s research folders. Invite students to think about the ways in which this research might have helped her write her book.
• Students will then begin reading In the Time of the Butterflies and keep the author’s research process in mind.

After students complete Part I of Alvarez’s novel, implement lesson #2.
Introduce Creating and Leaving a Legacy Research Process

• For homework on the class day previous to this block, assign students the task of bringing an artifact (diary entry, letter, photograph, object, etc.) that connects to either a family legacy or a legendary story of ancestry to share with their small groups.
• In groups of four to five, students will share the stories of the objects that they have brought to class.

Introduce & Explore
20 minutes

• Once all students have finished sharing, students will brainstorm answers to the following questions in their Writer’s Notebooks in whatever form they choose (lists, prose, outlines, drawings, etc.):
  1. Julia Alvarez has used archives and libraries to conduct research for her novel that chronicles the legacy of the Mirabal sisters. In what ways do you chronicle or archive your own life?
  2. What legacy do you hope to leave for future generations?
  3. What stories has your family, heritage, or ancestry left?
4. **What can you and others learn from that legacy?**

- Conduct a brief discussion around these questions.

**Pass out copies of the “Creating and Leaving a Legacy” Project & Rubric handout** to all students and explain the project instructions.

- Students will conduct research about their cultural history using online library database tools such as ProQuest, FactsOnFile, EBSCO, and Gale. Students will aim to discover:
  - The historical context revolving around their chosen narrative.
  - Biographical information about a chosen figure that relates to the student’s cultural heritage. *Teachers are encouraged to be open to organic discoveries students make about their cultural history, even if it does not fit the above expectations.*
  - If students are choosing a narrative that is more personal in nature, students may also research their family history by using family stories, photo albums, scrapbooks, videos, interviews, etc. as primary sources as part of their research process.

- Students will validate their research process through concrete examples from Álvarez’s archived research for *In the Time of the Butterflies*, which the teacher will display for students, such as Álvarez’s in-depth planning of *In the Time of the Butterflies*, which includes:
  - Brief outline of the history of Dominican Republic, 1500-1960. See “Outline Dominican Republic” PDF.
  - In-depth outlines of historical events in the Mirabal sisters’ lives, 1924-1960. See “Outline Novel Chapters” PDF.
  - In-depth outlines of *In the Time of the Butterflies* chapters. See “Outline Novel Chapters” PDF.

- Their research will culminate in an annotated bibliography of at least three credible sources that will cover background information about their cultural ancestry:
  1. Brief history of cultural background
  2. Significant historical figures
  3. A current event
  4. Personal family history

- Students will begin conducting research in class with assistance from the teacher.

- Students will continue reading *In the Time of the Butterflies* and two to three lesson days for research will be included during the subsequent weeks in which students will finish the novel.
  - Teachers are encouraged to schedule formal and informal checkpoint dates for assessing students’ research process during this period.
  - Mini-lessons over finding reliable primary and secondary sources, how to cite sources, how to format annotated bibliographies, and peer-evaluation are further advised for this period, depending on students’ familiarity and understanding.
LESSON 3

Engage
15 minutes

Introduction to Creating and Leaving a Legacy Project

- Students will read Julia Alvarez's poem, "Why I Write."
  - Facilitate a discussion about the role that writing plays in the preservation of the past and laying the foundation for the future.
  - After discussion, students will draw a concept map that illustrates other ways to preserve history.
    - Students will share their concept maps in small groups and add to their own illustrations as they discuss and share ideas.

Introduce & Explore
25 minutes

- Ask students to use a Venn diagram to think about the genre, message, audience, and effect that a narrative produces by comparing Alvarez’s book In the Time of the Butterflies, “Chasing Butterflies” essay, and “Why I Write” poem.
- Next, students will compare the message and genre of other media that communicate similar messages of celebrated culture. Examples include
  - the program for Las Mariposas, an Eveoke Dance Theatre production (see p. 2 of “Connected Media” PDF);
  - a program from Ballet Nacional Dominicano’s performance of Homenaje a las Hermanas Mirabal (see pp. 3-4 of “Connected Media” PDF);
  - and articles and promotional materials from the Showtime production of In the Time of the Butterflies (see pp. 5-11 of “Connected Media” PDF).
- Conduct a group discussion about authorial intent / message and the choice of the vehicle or genre through which students can express their ideas given an intended audience.

Explain
10 minutes

As a class, revisit the “Creating and Leaving a Legacy” project handout in order to remind students of the overview for the final project for the unit.

*Note: Students will benefit from having two to three block periods of dedicated class time to work on final products. Teachers are encouraged to avoid assigning other classwork during the week that students are completing their final products.

Apply & Evaluate
~40 minutes

- Students will brainstorm possible medium to use personally for their “Creating and Leaving a Legacy Project.”
- Pass out copies of the “Product Proposal” handouts for students to complete as they reach a decision about their project.
  - Monitor student progress and answer logistical questions students may have as they contemplate possibilities for their project.

Closure

Students will submit their completed “Product Proposal” sheet as an exit ticket.

*Review and provide comments on students’ proposals quickly in order to
Future Lessons

I. During the revision and editing process, the teacher can give examples of Julia Alvarez's own revision process by showing concrete examples of the author's thought process and approach to revising her work. The teacher may also model or give suggestions for helping students think about word choice, organization or chronology of the narrative, etc.

- Early drafts of Dedé epilogue, 1992-1993
  - Models several daily drafts with edits and revisions by Alvarez herself from its early incarnation in February 1992 to May 1992. See “Dede Epilogue Drafts” PDF.
- Drafts with revision notes, 1992-1993. See “Drafts with Revision Notes” PDF.
- Editorial correspondence with Shannon and Judy
  - Models the importance and validity of peer review and revision, especially interesting to use in conjunction with character development of Dedé, Patria, Minerva, and Mate. See “Editorial Correspondence” PDF.

II. Students present their final “Legacy” projects during class in a Students’ Stories Symposium. Family members may be invited to be part of the audience as students present their stories and celebrate their cultural histories.

III. Extension lessons may also focus on having students reflect on their findings about the past as a way to think about and explore their actions in the present and their trajectory for the future.

Resources:


