|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Amelia Afolayan | [EXPLORING IDENTITY THROUGH LITERATURE](https://youtu.be/wxWoZiT7oBs)Amelia Afolayan6th Grade ELA Teacher | Eliot K-8 Innovation School, Boston Public Schools Video URL: <https://youtu.be/wxWoZiT7oBs>  |
| *This lesson was adapted from sessions 8 and 9 of the “Social Issues Book Club” unit by Lucy Calkins and the folks at Columbia University’s Reading and Writing Project.* |

|  |
| --- |
| Learn more about this video and Amelia’s culturally responsive teaching (CRT) journey: |
| **What are you proud of and excited to share from this video? Why do you think this is a strong example of culturally responsive teaching?** | *In this video, I draw upon the work of Dr. Gholdy Muhammad that she outlines in her book, Cultivating Genius. In the book, she outlines what she refers to as the “Four Pursuits,” which she derived from the history of African American Literary Societies (including one here in Boston!)* *In this lesson, I focus on the first of the four pursuits, identity. By “thinking aloud” while generating my own identity map, I aim to model the type of introspection necessary to deeply think about one’s own identity. Then, students are given the space and scaffolds to do this for themselves. Finally, students had the opportunity to share their identity maps with the class, thus further deepening our class’ sense of community while celebrating students’ unique identities.* *This work then connected to the literature, as they were then asked to shift their thinking away from “self” and onto “other,” as they thought critically about which social groups Francisco from Francisco Jiminez’ The Circuit: Stories From the Life of a Migrant Child belongs to and how those aspects of his identity may be contributing to his trouble in the passage.* |
| **What advice would you give to another educator who wants to develop their CRT skills?** | *My advice would be not to wait. This work is messy, imperfect, and often difficult. And yet, it is so vital. Begin with yourself - examine your own internal biases and lean into the discomfort of unlearning a lifetime of preconceptions. Center the voices of BIPOC folks leading this movement. Really listen - not to respond, but to learn. Be honest with yourself and with others. Then, take what you’ve learned and apply it to your practice immediately. This will be iterative work, so don’t expect it to be flawless the first moment. Keep learning, keep reflecting, keep listening.* |
| **What are some of the most valuable resources you’ve come across to support your CRT learning journey?** | *As a teacher of literature, I have found Gholdy Muhammad’s book, Cultivating Genius, to be a valuable source of both information and techniques to inform my CRT practice. In it, she outlines what she refers to as the “Four Pursuits,” which she derived from the history of African American Literary Societies. This book has served as a pillar for the reinvention of my practice.* |