



Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens: Craig Rodwell

Introduction

This lesson focuses on the ideal of understanding one's true self through the LGBTQ+ lens of Craig Rodwell. Some themes that could be explored with the lesson include childhood choices, gay rights pioneers, and the creation of Pride celebrations. Through the narrative of Craig Rodwell students gain a new perspective on how childhood choices can affect an individual's true self and a new understanding of the importance of LGBTQ+ history.

This lesson was created as part of the Making Gay History / National Education Association Teaching Fellowship. Each lesson specifically uses a podcast episode and related resources from the Making Gay History podcast. These lessons have been created so that teachers across the country have the context and tools to bring archival audio from the Making Gay History podcast into middle and high school classrooms.

The Making Gay History podcast brings LGBTQ+ history to life through the voices of the people who lived it. We strive to create a world where everyone understands, respects, and honors the experiences and histories of LGBTQ+ people by providing engaging and accessible entry points to its largely hidden history. The podcast is hosted by historian and journalist Eric Marcus, who has been documenting LGBTQ+ history for more than 35 years.

Grade Level

9-12

This lesson has been implemented in a multi-level English Learner classroom that includes students from 9th through 12th grades with varying English Language proficiency levels, utilizing WIDA English Language Development standards.

Disciplines / Unit Recommendations

This lesson was created for English Language Learners, embedded into the Hampton-Brown Edge: Reading, Writing, and Language: Level A Curriculum: Unit 3 - True Self. In this unit, attention to developing reading and writing skills is an integral part of the lesson.

Essential Question: Do We Find or Create Our True Selves? (Discovery of struggles that people face about their identities).

WIDA English Language Development Standard 2: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts.

The lesson utilizes a modified Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model with specific target WIDA language domains (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) for multilingual learners. The visual and auditory components are comprehensive inputs that create a lesson that all multilingual learners will understand. The final product of the lesson, the Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) paragraph, is the summative assessment for the entire lesson.

- [SIOP](#)
- [WIDA Language Domains](#)

Estimated Time

The estimated time for this lesson is two 90-minute block sessions.

Preparation

It is recommended that teachers double-check all links as some may shift since they are not hosted by Making Gay History directly.

- ☐ Listen to **Making Gay History Season 11 Episode 1: Craig Rodwell**.
<https://bit.ly/mgh-rodwell>

As the teacher, you know your students and teaching situation best. It is always advised to listen to the full podcast individually before playing for or assigning to your students, just as you would review any text for classroom use.

Optional: Make the [podcast episode transcript](#) available for students to read/reference when listening to the podcast.

- ☐ Review Building Background Slide Video, *Craig Rodwell, The Co-Creator of Pride* from [Powered by Rainbows](#).
- ☐ Review [Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens](#) slide deck.
- ☐ Print [Handout 1](#): Craig Rodwell Five W's and H Questions, for you and your students.
- ☐ Print text- only [PDF transcript](#) of Craig Rodwell - Making Gay History Podcast for you and your students.
- ☐ Print [Handout 2](#): Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens CER Graphic Organizer for your students.

Background

Craig Rodwell was a gay rights pioneer in both the pre-Stonewall homophile movement and the 1970s post-Stonewall gay liberation era. Rodwell participated in several of the earliest LGBTQ+ rights demonstrations on record. In 1967, Rodwell opened the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, one of the first gay bookstores in the world. It quickly became a hub for gay rights organizing in New York City. In 1970, on the first anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, he co-organized the inaugural Christopher Street Liberation Day March—the blueprint for the Pride marches and celebrations now attended by millions of people around the world each year.

Procedure

1. Utilizing the Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens Google Slides deck, play the video on the Building Background slide entitled “Craig Rodwell: The Co-Creator of Pride” (*WIDA Listening Domain*).
 - a. Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens.
 - b. If video does not play within the slide deck, please access the [video](#) directly.
2. After the video is viewed, pass out [Handout 1](#): Craig Rodwell Five W's and H Questions (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?) and ask students to complete the graphic organizer. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups as a scaffold for those who do not have the English-language proficiency level. Once students have completed, allow students to compare answers. Show sample answers from the slide deck if necessary (*WIDA Writing Domain*).

3. Next, play the embedded audio from the Making Gay History Podcast Season 11 Episode 1 Craig Rodwell with the text transcript (*WIDA Listening Domain*).
 - a. Craig Rodwell - Making Gay History Podcast. <https://bit.ly/mgh-rodwell>
 - b. [Transcript](#) of Craig Rodwell - Making Gay History Podcast.
4. Show pictures from the slide deck to present the essential question to students. Ask: After listening to the interview, consider Craig Rodwell's situation based on what he himself said. Did he find or create his true self? Listen to students' oral responses to gauge whether students understand the question (*WIDA Speaking Domain*).
5. Allow students time to find the evidence in the text transcript to support their answer to the question. Students can highlight and/or underline specifics within the transcript that support their claim (*WIDA Listening and Reading Domain*).
6. Have students complete [Handout 2](#): Understanding True Self - LGBTQ+ Lens CER Graphic Organizer to answer the question: Did Craig Rodwell find or create his true self? Use direct quotes and/or evidence from the transcript (*WIDA Writing Domain*). CER Graphic Organizers will be graded utilizing the [WIDA Writing Scoring Scale](#).

Extension Activity

Oral Debate:

Once all CER Graphic Organizers are completed, pair students up with opposing claims to conduct a five-minute oral debate. Students may have their copy of the text-only transcript of the episode at hand for reference (*WIDA Speaking Domain*). The teacher may score the debate using the [WIDA Speaking Scoring Scale](#).

About the Author: Dr. Alexander Tai

Dr. Alexander Tai is a high school multilingual learner specialist/educator in Columbia, MO. He has been a K-12 multilingual learner specialist/educator for eleven years, with international English teaching experience in Taiwan. Dr. Tai hopes teachers who implement this lesson in their own classrooms will appreciate the graphic organizers as furnishing multiple scaffolds for students' academic success.