

William Lewandowski

Character Relationship Mapping in *All American Boys* (Analysis One)

Length of lesson: Length of one block class or two regular-sized, 50-minute class periods

Grade: 10th Grade

Standard(s) addressed: 9.4.3.3 – Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop a theme.

Materials:

- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely (Specifically sections “Friday” and “Saturday”)

Computer to use mapping program, bubbl.us

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Organize a mind map of characters from *All American Boys* and their connections to one another.
- Appraise their (the student’s) impressions of the characters over the course of the text using textual evidence to support their appraisal.

Assessment:

Exemplary: Student created a mind map featuring all required characters and their connections to each other in a way that is well-organized and aesthetically appealing. The mind map has a key with distinguished variables of line types, colors, and/or arrows, and the student uses the key throughout the map without any unknown variables. The students also have a legend with their appraisals of their relationships or impressions of each character. Each explanation has five to

seven sentences, which the student describes with specific details from as to why they feel a certain way toward each character.

Satisfactory: Student created a mind map featuring all required characters and their connections to each other in a way that is organized and structured in an understandable fashion. The mind map has a key with different variables of line types, colors, and/or arrows, but some variables may be slightly difficult to distinguish from one another or an unknown variable may be present. The students also have an appraisal of their relationship or impression of each character within a legend below the map or on a separate sheet. Each explanation is generally around five sentences and uses a few specific details from the text as to why they feel a certain way toward each character.

Developing: Student created a mind map featuring a majority of the required characters (but may be missing a couple minor characters) and their connections to each other in a way that is legible but needs more organization. The mind map has a key with variables (colors, line types, and/or arrows) that are not diverse enough and hard to distinguish from one another. The student also has appraisals of their relationships or impressions of each character either in bubbles or in a legend, but the explanations are less than five sentences and do not provide specific details from the book supporting their view towards each character. The layout of the appraisals makes it hard to determine which appraisal is for which character.

Inadequate: Student created a mind map featuring some of the required characters and their connections to each other in a way that is disorganized and difficult to read. The mind map is

missing a key and does not have a way to discern what specific colors, line types, or arrows mean. The student's appraisals of their relationships or impressions of each character are extremely brief or absent, under-developed, and lack specific details from the book supporting their view towards each character. The legend is either missing all together or does not correspond with the map at all.

Formative Assessment: Using the guidelines listed under the "Assessment" section, students will get a ✓+, ✓, ✓-, or 0, depending on where they fall within the expectations (Exemplary, Satisfactory, Developing, Inadequate)

Procedure:

The students, at this point, should have read Rashad and Quinn's chapters of the sections "Friday" and "Saturday." By now, students have been introduced to most of the main characters involved in the story and should have an idea of their initial impression to each of them. Using the assignment sheet labeled, "Mind Mapping Connections in *All American Boys*," begin the lesson by going through handout.

***This lesson will be repeated after being assigned "Sunday" and "Monday," "Tuesday" and "Wednesday," and "Thursday" and "Friday." After each of the group sections, students will create a new map and legend explaining how their connections, feelings, and impressions have changed. The required character list will change as more characters create a stronger presence later in the book. The optional list will not remain so large by the end of the book. (Another lesson plan will address these future readings and maps.)*

1. Read over the assignment sheet with the students. Make sure there are no questions and that the students understand what is being asked of them. (10 minutes)

2. Present the mind mapping program students will be using to create their maps (bubbl.us).
Go through the different features on how to change colors, arrows, and lines styles, as well as how to connect bubbles, alter text, and create a key. Create a quick example as to how the students could set up their maps while showing them these different aspects of the program. When quick demonstration has been complete, show the students how to print. If students make a free account, they are able to save their map to their account.
 - a. In the example attached to this lesson plan, I used the bubble color to represent the generalized impression I had of the character. I also used different line types to distinguish the connections characters have with one another. Students can use the program, colors, line types, and arrows however they like to map their characters! (15 minutes)
3. Allow time for students to set up a free account with bubbl.us. (10 minutes)
4. Give students the rest of the class period to work on building their key and mind/character map. They should be able to make their whole map by the end of class. (20 minutes)
5. During the next class period, have students finish up what is left of their maps. At the end of the timeframe given, advise students to wrap up, as you will be explaining the legend section of the assignment to them. (5-10 minutes)
6. Gathering the students' attention, instruct them on what is to be expected of the legend. (Use the assignment sheet to help you and the students.) They will need to explain where their connection (or disconnection) to the characters comes from, as it states on the assignment sheet. Go over an example using your example map and the book on how this should look. (There is also an example legend attached to this lesson plan for your

assistance.) The students should find where their impressions or connections to the character stem from. They do not need to use direct quotes, but they should mark where the textual evidence is found. Make sure there are no questions or confusion before allowing the students to get to work. (15 minutes)

7. Allow the students to work on their legends for the rest of the class period. They should have enough time to finish the legend before class is over. (20 minutes)
8. Have students print off their maps and legends and turn in before the end of the day. (5 minutes)

Differentiation: The program used is electronic and accessible to most students. Though if internet or electronics are a problem with a student, they could draw their maps and handwrite their legends.

If students are having difficulty connecting with any character, you could have them list each character out on a piece of paper and describe each of them, either with memory or looking through the book. When they have some ideas about who the characters are, ask them: “Does this character remind you of someone you know? Do you like this character? Is this character someone you would be a friend with? Once they have answered these questions, they can use them to write their legend.

Citation:

This lesson was inspired by a character mapping method of teaching presented by Milnor, Milnor, and Mitchell’s “Character Mapping,” pages 139-140, *Bridging English*, Ed. 6, Pearson, 2017.

Attachments:

- Assignment sheet (Mind Mapping Connections in All American Boys PDF)

- [Example map and key \(Friday and Saturday AAB Mind Map Example PDF\)](#)
- [Example legend \(Friday and Saturday AAB Legend Example PDF\)](#)