

Exploring the Staircase of Text Complexity Using Rosalyn Schanzer's book
**WITCHES! THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE TALE
OF DISASTER IN SALEM**



Or how ELA and SS Middle School teachers can use this scholarly work
to bring American History to life for students
~Fun and rigorous CCSS fulfillment plus nonfiction literature all in one place~

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How to use Schanzer's work as informational literature 6-8 Literacy in History/ Social Studies for:

Key ideas and details, determining central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source, providing an accurate summary of the sources distinct from opinion, identifying steps in a text's description of a process, researching science, cultural manners, oral history, and pop culture topics, building knowledge through content, grounding writing in textual evidence, investigating, analyzing and authoring a range of informational and fiction texts, identifying aspects of a text that reveal an author's purpose or point of view, integrating visual information with other information in charts and photographs, maps and print/digital sources, distinguishing among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text, analyzing the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic, fostering study of academic language and reading and comprehending history/social studies and literature texts in a 6-8 text complexity band and beyond.

Menu of Activities - Teacher Choice - Sequence yours to choose and infuse

SURVEY: PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT:

Which "witch" fact is true or false? What are your "witch" assumptions?

ACTIVITIES:

1. Real Readers Theater versions of Witches
2. First Focus –CSI (Context Schema Investigators)/
Let the Lexicography Lead- Thesaurus Team To Task
3. Which "witch" perspective is right? Which "witch" is wrong?
4. Back to the Future- Mission Witch Rescue
5. "Poe" poetry take on the Salem Story
6. Mock Trial 1692 Do Over

GETTING STARTED:

Witches! Which facts are true/ which parts are false? –Pre/Post Assessment

Teachers: This survey should be administered before and after students study the book and a discussion should be held after the students have taken the survey a second time. During the discussion, students should collaboratively highlight their current content and misassumptions about witches. The final question parallels the end of Schanzer’s work. Students should be encouraged to highlight their position in regard to this question with up-to-date news stories or issues.

MAKING THE CCSS Reading in History/SS STANDARDS CONNECTION:

RH- Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies

RH 7 Integrate visual information

RH 8 Distinguish among fact, opinion and reasoned judgment in a text

RH 9 analyze the relationship between a primary source and secondary source on the same topic

Name _____

First Look: date ____ year ____ grade ____

Second Look: date ____ year ____ grade ____

Pre-assessment Survey

Check all options that make sense to you

1. Based upon my prior readings in literature and prior knowledge of American History, I feel that historically the Salem Witch Trials
____are mostly a myth associated with Halloween
____had some connection to actual historical events
____ were based upon real accusations that witches had harmed innocent victims

2. A historical informational book on **Witches** will/will not be useful for me as a reader in order to develop my reading, writing, cultural and general American History knowledge because

3. The legal trial procedure and court system in 1692 was the same as today's.

True False

4. If accused people accused of being "witches" were put to death, they probably deserved it.

True False

5. Reading an accurate account of what happened in Salem in 1692 from a 21st century science, psychology and legal perspective, may make a difference in analyzing whether the judges of that time reached the correct verdict.

True False Maybe

6. In 1689, Boston Minister Cotton Mather wrote the bestselling book *Memorable Providences* about settlers possessed by demons and plagued by witches. He claimed to have witnessed these hauntings. Could the popularity of a book in 1689 have influenced the witch trials in 1692?

Yes No Maybe

7. Prisoners have to be fed and cared for by the government when they are imprisoned. This has always been true of the prison system in the United States and in the colonies.

Yes No Maybe

8. All accused witches were women of the same general age and description.

Yes No Maybe

9. All judges involved in the Salem trial were schooled in the law of that time period.

Yes No

10. Besides the idea that witches had attacked certain victims, there is no other possible explanation for the hysteria surrounding these victims' symptoms.

Yes No

Post Assessment Survey

After the unit study, discussions and activities, I now feel that the Witch hunt and trials of 1692 were:

Worth learning about today because

Or were not worth learning about today because

Schanzer ends the book by saying:

“Never again will we allow witchcraft, the Devil, and the lure of superstition to rule the day in America. Or will we?”

Based upon the newspaper and online news, does America still allow witchcraft to rule the day?

Explain your answer.

Are you currently studying or have you studied American History as literature that includes stories in which “witch hunts” take place? _____

How can we apply the lessons of 1692 to today’s witch hunts?

Activity 1: Real Reader's Theater Version of *Witches! The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem*

MAKING THE CCSS History/ SS Reading RH Connections:

RH 1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of sources.

RH 4/RH 5 Determine meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text.

RH 10- By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in grade appropriate and independently and proficiently.

Determine how text presents information

MAKING THE CCSS ELA Writing Standards (W):

W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences and events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well structured event sequences.

W6 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

MAKING THE CCSS ELA Speaking and Listening Standards (SL):

SL 6 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on adapting the Schanzer book to a reader's theater performance and then to a podcast format for those two different audiences- none of which will experience visuals as back up for the *live* theater performance and one of which will need to be engaged through spoken readings, sound effects and underscored music alone.

SL 2 Interpret information in diverse media and formats

SL 4 Use appropriate eye contact for Readers Theater live and for podcast effective recording session. Speak with adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

SL 5 Include multimedia components (graphics, images, sounds, music – public domain audio files or original student recorded music) and visual displays for Readers Theater live to clarify information

SL 6 Adapt speech to the variety of different Readers Theater versus colloquial classroom conversation and podcast recording context and tasks as needed

MAKING CCSS Language Standards (L) Connections:

L 1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing and speaking.

L3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.

L4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple meaning words and phrases based on reading *Witches* work.

L6 Acquire and use grade and age appropriate and beyond academic and domain specific words and phrases.

WOW! SO MANY CCSS Connections – but how can addressing all these CCSS standards be fun for the students??

Recipe for Readers Theater: Real Product for Read Audiences = Real Fun

1. Explain or introduce the Reader's Theater Concept to the students either by sharing some materials from Arlene F. Gallagher's Law Related Readers Theater collection (Acting Together-Readers Theatre-Excerpts from Children's Literature on Themes from the Constitution) or other works. Show students the text /story print version from which these Reader theater pieces were derived. (Use a Smart Board or projector so that the students can compare both texts.)
2. Allow the students to explain how the print text was used by Gallagher to adapt with permission from the story authors their Reader's theater scripts.
3. Elicit from the students that the story narrative has been re-crafted and structured for Reader's theater in terms of the following elements: Setting, characters, dialogue and special effects/music.
4. Given the text of Schanzer's *Witches*, ask the students how they might develop a Reader's Theater script.
5. Give them time in small groups to go over the short work to identify a chapter that might be suited for Reader's Theater adaptation. Tell them that after taking a five minute time period to search for a chapter that is appropriate for Readers Theater deconstruction and redesign, they will get a chance to share their "finds" with the whole class. Ask that they be prepared to explain why these "finds" are adaptable for the live performance Readers Theater format.
6. As the students share their finds, list the suggested chapters and the reasons they were identified. Among the potential chapters that are easily adapted to this format and genre of live performance theater are: Chapter Three "**Let the Grilling Begin,**" Chapter Six "**The King of Hell,**" and Chapter Eight "**The End is Near.**" Make certain that in their reasons or arguments for selecting these or other chapters of the book, the students cite the inclusion of actual dialogue already in these chapters and actual letter texts that lend themselves to reader's theater scripts.
7. Once students have made their suggestions for these chapters, ask them how they will work within their small groups (no more than 3-4) to transform these chapters into scripts that can be performed before a live peer student or adult audience. * **NOTE TO TEACHER:** You may decide to model the Reader's Theater process of restructuring a print text to meet this genre's format

with your whole class as a coach and a recorder. This also might be more useful with a group of ESL or CTT or special needs learners.

8. Have students detail steps they will take as a team to use the texts as a basis for their performance scripts. Among these steps might be:
 - a) Using yellow markers to highlight specific quotes or excerpts from letters and testimony that would make the best dialogue.
 - b) Reading the text carefully for details of stage set and potential special effects (screams, perhaps music) that would enhance the performance.
 - c) Examining Schanzer's black-white and scratchboard illustrations in the book. Student artists can use this technique and style for a potential backdrop or even poster hangings as scenery for the readers theater.
9. If the students are working in groups, give them 25-30 minutes as needed to work in teams to actually use the selected chapter for the text based task of identifying setting, characters and dialogue plus possible music/sound effects and visuals for the Readers Theater Script. If the script is being developed collaboratively with the whole class, then it will take at least one period to develop.
10. Use the close of the initial writing period and the entire following period for students to share aloud in their groups their scripts. Make certain that the students serve as audiences for each group's script and react to the scripts with questions, comments, and suggestions.

READER'S THEATER SCRIPTS are meant to be performed in order to validate the students' text based tasks and to genuinely situate the students as historians and storytellers as well as reflective citizens. Therefore this project goes beyond just printing out the scripts and perhaps posting them online or on site. Have the students actually rehearse for a performance of their chapter before a set audience- whether it's their peer students in an auditorium or library or a public library reading room or a youth arts festival or as part of workshop at a teacher conference. Have them rehearse with their particular target audience in mind as well as their targeted physical venue. Make certain that audience feedback forms are distributed so that the students have a quantitative summative data base for their project. Teachers may want to have some of the student script writers conduct a post theater production discussion of how and why this theater piece about events of 1692 relates to 21st century global and national concerns or does not relate.

If you have ready access to podcasting and an online site, the next CCSS Writing for another purpose transformation might be to have the students adopt their successful Readers Theater Script to the podcast time frame and audio genre format. Of course, a critical discussion before such an adoption would focus on the different components that need to be emphasized in the podcast script and those such as visual scenery, signage, lightening, slide show footage which need to be eliminated from the live performance scripts. In and of itself this double writing format script offers students an excellent comparative scripting task that enhances their genre specific writing skills while also being rigorous in terms of the analytic reading of Schanzer's work necessary for either adoption.

Another excellent resource for anchor readers' theatre genre scripts is:

www.thebestclass.org/rtscripts.html

Activity 2: - CSI (Colonial Salem Investigation)

Dictionary of Words and Terms

To prepare for writing this authentic history of the Salem Witch Trials, Rosalyn Schanzer went through actual primary source transcripts, letters, sermons, and other documents. Of course, with several hundred years of English language use, changes in spelling and terms which are now archaic, plus uncovering many terms still in use but unknown to those who are not lawyers or historians, *Witches* is crammed with rich vocabulary available for collecting and compiling by its student readers.

Making CCSS Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (RH) connections.

RH 4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history /social studies.

Making CCSS Writing Standards for ELA connections:

W 2 Write informative and explanatory texts which use precise language and domain specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Making CCSS Language Standards for ELA connections:

L 6 Acquire and use accurately grade and age appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

1. Begin this activity by challenging the students to become CSI investigators. Tell them that in this case CSI stands for Colonial Salem Investigators. Explain to them that as 21st century readers and commentators on these 1692 events, their challenge is to identify and to define words which are unfamiliar to the 21st century investigator of this case based upon the context of these words in the book or the author's explanation or consultation with a print or online source.
2. Begin their search for such words by telling them that for the purpose of the class investigation, they will be divided into two opposing teams who have to find within two chapters- **chapter 7** and **chapter 8** of the book- the meaning of two terms not frequently used in the 21st century.
3. Post the terms – **spectral evidence** and **peine forte et dure**. Challenge the students to both find these terms by page and to write down their definitions. Tell them that they are free to write the definitions using contextual clues or outside references, either in print or online. If they use outside references, these must be cited. In addition, allow the students the option of defining these words through an illustration or cartoon. Give the students no more than 90 seconds to find the words.

4. Once the words have been found , have them identify the page numbers and then offer as many different definitions and ways of defining the words as possible- e.g. visual, spoken, referenced to a print resource or to a web resource or presented as a visual (graphic organizer or cartoon).
5. Tell students that while they have had the opportunity to really study this exciting true account of the Salem Witch Trials in 1692, many student readers who pick it up to read independently may have trouble with it despite the terrific design and illustrations. These students and certainly students new to the United States may have trouble getting past the unfamiliar words and spellings to grasp the true disaster that still haunts American history. Tell them that their task is to work through chapters 7 and 8 in small groups of no more than four students to create glossaries or dictionaries of these unfamiliar terms which may stop some potential readers from connecting with this important book. Suggest that they can explain the words they identify in dual languages - Spanish and other dominant native languages in the class - and that they can also draw visual images or look up graphics on the web to illustrate the words and terms or to write a serious or a funny definition of various terms. Give them 25 minutes for this task.
6. As they are at work in their teams, move around to help them and make certain each team is coming up with a glossary of no fewer than 6-10 words and terms from its designated chapter.
7. After they have had time to work in groups, have them share together as a whole class the variety of words and ways of defining them in terms of a glossary or visual dictionary they have identified. The students who are from an ELL background will have some familiarities with visual dictionaries.
8. Depending upon the class time and individual student interests, some of the class members or the classes as a whole can tackle the work to evolve a 21st century student glossary or dictionary to complement this book. Products can also be submitted to Rosalyn Schanzer at:
roz.schanzer@cox.net

Activity 3: -

Which “Witch” Perspective Rings True?

~Whose Point of View? Accused Witches or Afflicted Accusers & Other Witch Hunters?
What if it is up to you?

~In what ways would this absolutely true tale of disaster shift if it were retold from the witches’ or witch hunters’ perspectives exclusively?

~**ELA Common Core Shifts Emphasized here:** Text Complexity, Rigorous Student Centered Discussion, Balance Literary Work and Non Fiction- Collaboration and Comprehension

Making EIA Common Core Connections:

RI 6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and how it is conveyed within that text

RI 8 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from those which are not

RI 10 Read and comprehend literature including stories, dramas, and poems.

RI 11 Recognize , interpret and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama,. . . to other texts , ideas, cultural perspectives, eras and personal events, and situations.

Making CCSS ELA Writing Standards Connections:

W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

W 3 Write narratives to develop events with point of view perspectives that follow from the narrated events .

W7 Conduct short research projects, drawing on several sources.

W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research

1. Have the students explain what Point of View or Perspective is signified in storytelling. Use a number 1 movie/student favorite work such as Hunger Games or Twilight or as narrative. Allow them to talk about the point of view through which that story is told or use a student centered news event such as a student hero or student rights issue. A class literature or informational book can also be referenced to allow students an opportunity to talk about point of view. Allow the students to talk about the initial text perspective the news reporter uses to report the story. Make certain that they reference specific facts, details, and word choice as their text based evidence for their point of view arguments
2. Then direct them to the *Witches* text. First have them identify who the narrator is (answer- third person narrator-unnamed). Next ask them to identify the perspective through which the

tale is told in their print version. Tell them that they must support their point of view or perspective with text-based evidence that the narrator is indeed telling it through that perspective. Is the narrative a voice from 1692 or does the narrator seem to know about events that happened hundreds of years after 1692?

3. Make certain that when the students note the narrator's omniscient point of view, they explain their reasoning by providing supportive details, quotes, or other plot descriptions as evidence for their arguments.
4. Challenge the students to come up with perspectives that can also chronicle the witch hunts and trials. Make certain that they reference each point of view with references to the text. Other perspectives for this tale can include: the accused witches, the afflicted accusers, Reverend Parris, Cotton Mather, Governor Phips, Giles Corey, or even the Massachusetts state legislature that in the mid 1990's formally absolved the last Salem "witch" of all wrongdoing.
5. Provide the students with time during the class to begin a version of the Witches told from a selected perspective.
6. Provide them with a second additional time period in class for team/pair re-authoring of the Witches story. Make certain that the students have access to the Internet and other texts-informational and literary which are about the trials (i.e. Ann Turner's *Father of Lies*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and Mary Beth Norton's *In the Devil's Snare*- plus can check out www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/salem.htm.
7. Make certain that the students choose a variety of potential story perspectives through which the fable can be effectively retold. They should be encouraged to choose some novel perspectives on the events such as that of Sheriff Corwin or Tituba or Elizabeth Proctor, surviving but "dead in law" widow of John.
8. Close the second session with an opportunity for the student teams/pairs to collaborate over a week to perfect their **Which "Witch"** perspectives POVs (points of view) for a classroom/peer audience/adult group reading or even a print/e publication.
Literacy Project Product: Video, performance or visual **"Witch" way America? Festival** that features multiple perspectives for retelling the event.

Activity 4:

Back to the Future!! Mission Possible **Rewriting the shameful events of 1692- 21st Century Values, Evidence and Science- Research, Review, and Reboot-**

If time travelers from 21st century had been present and were participating in the community of Salem during the proceedings so vividly retold and researched by Rosalyn Schanzer, would they have immediately been moved to try to make the settlers aware of the many alternative explanations for the fits and hysteria described by the witch accusers? The omniscient narrator in this work points out the economic self interest motives, personal grudges, rivalries, political events, financial dealings between Reverend Parris and his congregation, Indian War blunders, and actual disease (encephalitis /Lyme disease) and ergot: all or some of which could have explained the events of 1692. What could time travelers armed with 21st century knowledge have done to stop the trials and hangings? What in the tradition of the ***Back to the Future*** genre could have been done if they could take a Quantum Leap back to 1692?

Having students work proactively to attempt to right the wrongs of 1692 without letting over 300 years and 19 deaths occur is excellent CCSS ELA and SS/History training for students as well as preparation for actively engaged 21st century citizenship.

Making ELA and SS/History Literacy Connections

Study of Text Complexity-comprehension of informational literacy print and digital primary source and secondary texts to build knowledge across a broad range of subject matter.

High quality text dependent questions and tasks . Students will need to discern the key points of text, request clarification, ask relevant questions, and cite text based evidence when offering an interpretation.

Balancing literature and informational research using the print Rosalyn Schanzer informational text as an initial text based task dependent starting point.

Making CCSS Reading Standards for Literacy in History/SS (RH)

RH 2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source: Provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH 7 Integrate visual information with other information in print and digital texts.

Making CCSS Reading Standards for Informational Text (RI)

RI 8 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Making CCSS Writing Standards Connections (W)

W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

W2 Write informative /explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, access the credibility of each source.

W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Making CCSS ELA Speaking and Listening Standards Connections:

S1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups and teacher led) with diverse partners on 21st perception of witch hunts and trials.

S4 Present claims and findings – use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

S5 Include multimedia components (graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

1. Now that the students have immersed themselves in the vocabulary, viewpoint, style, and contemporary analysis of the witch hunts and trials, ask them as a whole group to list and briefly brainstorm those aspects of the events which might have played out differently if the citizens of Salem had 21st knowledge. Ask that they focus on a rereading of chapter nine **“The End is Here”** before responding.
2. After the students have done their rereading, ask them to list details, evidence, statements and actions which in the 21st century would have instantly been refuted. Have the listed posted so that the whole class can view it and add to it.
3. Challenge the students to come up with two different media formats in which historical or narrative past events are revisited and revised or at least reviewed in terms of the justness of their resolutions. The students may come up with **Back to the Future** - the original and often replayed Science Fiction modern-day movie classic - and they will probably need to see a snippet of **48 Hours** - a broadcast magazine show in which a solo anchor journalist films a review of a closed contemporary case to explore whether the conviction of the accused was just or not. Generally a **Back to the Future** fictive genre format involves a 21st century time traveler with

knowledge of the future attempting in some way to rewrite the past, while the **48 Hours** format is focused on an actual journalist doing interviews with various individuals and sources about a case and concluding with the current disposition of the case and his/her own findings.

4. Have individuals or small groups of students select a role they want to play, for example: Journalists who will author a series exposing the witch hunts for the flawed and frenzied events they were; Solo time travelers writing a fictional diary; Authors spinning a Bradbury/Verne type story of what they encounter in Salem 1692.
5. Ask that they take one full class period to prepare a preliminary treatment (plan or summary) of what format they will use and list at least two secondary or primary sources they will consult beyond the **Witches** book. At least one of these should be a digital source.
6. Have the students revisit and critique their ideas by sharing them with the class as a whole.
7. Give the students at least one week to complete these projects, if possible adding one more class period so that the teacher can review the research and offer guidance as a coach. At the end of that period, have a reading where volunteers can share their works in progress and get helpful reactions and commentary.
8. Once the products are completed, they can become even more meaningful if a publication (e book/print) is made of them. Other ways to impart authenticity is to have these shares at a Witches event or in a display that can be part of a school-wide History Day Expo or a "Witch Hunt."
9. Whistle-Blowing media event. Some schools may have easy access to video recording of the 48 Hours products which can lend authenticity and validity to this activity. Since the Salem Witch Hunt adds a "real" historical component to school Halloween focus and is part of the ongoing Colonial History studies, filming and e-publishing these products extends their viability beyond a single school year and assures that incoming students learn about witches through researched student products.

Activity 5-

“POE” Poetry take on Witches-

Telling the True Tale of Disaster through the Poet’s Onomatopoeia Overview

Since the Common Core ELA skills are all about training students to bridge literacy going from fiction to informational and back again, why not allow students to have word play fun with taking the informational “true” content of this sad chapter in Salem history and retelling it as Edgar A. Poe might have? To do so, only requires that students review the original texts of Edgar A. Poe’s poetry- The Raven and Annabel Lee and then use them as a model for retelling the story in his sound rich, soulful poetry narrative style.

Making CCSS History/SS Connections in Reading (RH)

RH 2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary source or secondary source.

RH 5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, causally).

RH 7 Integrate visual information with other information in print and digital texts.

Making CCSS Connections in ELA Reading Literature (RL)

RL 5 Analyze how a stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting and plot.

RL 9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (stories and poems; historical informational works) in terms of their approaches to similar themes.

Making CCSS ELA Connections to Language (L)

L 5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings

L6 Acquire and use grade appropriate general academic and domain specific words and phrases

Making CCSS ELA Connections to Writing (W)

W 3 Write narratives in poetry to develop real events using effective techniques

1. Tell students that there are many creative ways to share and to spread the word about the true disaster of Salem in 1692. While Schanzer and other historians have chosen to do so in sequential and documented informational texts, some writers use various other formats to share stories.
2. If they are not already familiar with it, share the definition of ballads, and given the United States history theme of this work, share Longfellow’s work *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* among other choices.

3. Next ask them what the mood of Schanzer's work is. Suggest that they determine the mood by looking first at her table of contents. Elicit from them after this brief look the key chapter titles: "Dire Diagnosis," "A Torrent of Evil," "The King of Hell" "The End is Here" and "What Happened Next."
4. Have them explain the mood of the work using Schanzer's titles .
5. Ask them to examine the 17th century style scratchboard illustrations she did for the work. Have them point to specific illustrations to explain how Schanzer used her artistic talents to enhance a specific mood /feel for her story. Focus on how the red accents in the work contribute to that mood.
6. Then tell them that while the story of Salem has been brilliantly retold by Schanzer and other historians and also revisited by Arthur Miller and Ann Turner, there are other literary genres that can effectively communicate the mood of horror, pain and terror evoked by these true events.
7. Share with them the texts of the two Edgar Allen Poe poems. Ask them to pick out words and characters in each poem which demonstrate how Poe infuses the same mournful quality into his poetry.
8. Ask them to identify some of the sound words used by Poe to intensify that mood.
9. Challenge them to consider how they can use the framework of either poem to retell **Witches** as a ballad. Encourage them to be as creative as they wish in terms of how they would adapt the format and characters of these two famous Edgar Allen Poe works to the **Witches** events of 1692.
10. List their ideas: among these might be having one of the survivors of Salem such as Reverend Parris or repentant Judge Samuel Sewell retell the story as part of the Raven setting or having someone who loved one of the deceased retell the story using the framework of Annabel Lee . Among the strong candidates for that recasting in ballad format would be Elizabeth Proctor whose husband was hung or Betty Parris reflecting as an adult mother on the damage caused by her testimony.
11. Allow the students to either work independently or to divide into small groups to author their Poe-style ballads. Ask that they include a short statement detailing what sections and personalities from the book they used in their retelling and referencing the pages in Schanzer's book.
12. Give them a period for the writing and at the end of that period. Ten minutes before the end, ask for volunteers to read their works aloud. Make certain that each read-aloud ballad gets comments from student peers.
13. Finally point out the power of the thumbnail illustrations and full page illustrations on the left side of each chapter in the Schanzer book. Ask for volunteer artists to illustrate completed work using Schanzer illustrations as a model and/or researching period illustrations as a model.

The literacy end product for this activity can be bulletin board of witches' ballads with illustrations or an onsite school gallery show or online school web site posting. Products can also be submitted to Rosalyn Schanzer at: roz.schanzer@cox.net

Activity 6-

Witches- 21st Century Mock Trial Do-over

As 21st Century readers with a strong background in the contemporary US criminal court system or at the very least some procedural television court room drama experience, read **Witches**. Students cannot help but be astonished at how very different acceptable trial procedure and questioning of defendants was in 1692 compared to today. Many schools have law and community service programs which give students the opportunity to observe criminal trials and to participate at school in mock trials based upon pertinent issues and cases. In light of the CCSS Speaking and Listening Standards- including comprehension and collaboration and presentation of knowledge and ideas, the mock trial activity will engage students in taking the testimony and trial transcripts included in **Witches** to a 21st Century constitutional judicial procedure review level. Preparing for their roles as attorneys, witnesses, and judges, the students can closely read this informational work and then evaluate the extent to which the proceedings if convened in the 21st century would have had a very different outcome. In addition, at the end all the students can serve as judges and write a verdict in light of how the spectral evidence and natural world evidence would hold up in courts today.

Making Common Core Literacy in History/Social Studies Connections- Reading (RH)

RH 3 Identify key steps in a text's description of the trial process

RH 8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Making ELA CCSS Writing Connections

W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and evidence.

W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

W7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question , drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate

W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source.

W9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.

W 10 Write routinely over extended time frames for a range of mock trial specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Making ELA CCSS Common Core Speaking and Listening (SL) connections

SL 1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

SL 2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats and explains how it contributes to a topic , text and issue.

SL 3 Delineate a speaker’s arguments and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by evidence and those that are not.

SL 4 Present claims and findings, use appropriate eye contact , adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

SL 6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks.

WOW – what a list of Standards!!!!!!

But don’t worry, students will be blissfully unaware of all the rigorous learning they are doing as they retry this case using mock trial framework.

This activity will need at least 2-3 preparation periods, one rehearsal and one trial period plus one for sharing of judge verdict and student response.

1. Share with students if they are unfamiliar the framework of MOCK TRIALS:

Opening Arguments by attorneys on both sides- can be two students as defending attorneys and two as prosecuting attorneys

Each attorney or team of attorneys begins : During this trial I/we will show that

Presentation of evidence

Questioning of witnesses, defendants if desired

Cross examination by opposing side

Cross redirect examination

Closing statements by attorneys

Judge’s verdict

Tell the students that as part of reading **Witches**, they are going to have the opportunity to retry the case against the accused witches as it might have been tried were the accusations to be lodged today.

Challenge them to return to the book and to identify various witness and defendant roles.

Have them reference the accused witches and witch hunter, victims and judge list/survivors included in the book.

Give them ten minutes.

2. List the potential roles they have identified and classify them-witnesses, defendants, judges, recorder.
3. Ask for volunteers for the roles with the most work- the team of attorneys and the Judge. Have students volunteer for specific witness roles whose dialogue and actions have to be aligned with page references in the Schanzer book.
4. Have the class as a whole draw up a list of actual evidence noted in the book and list each piece of evidence and testimony by page.
5. Ask which student would want to assume the role of Judge. Have that person review appropriate 21st Century Criminal Court procedure.
6. Over the next 2 periods, have the attorneys draw up a specific list of witnesses to call on each side with questions for them, have the witnesses and other characters practice and adapt their behavior and comments from specific pages of Schanzer's book, and have the attorneys work on both their opening and closing statements (which as in any trial will be subject to change). Other class members can serve as researchers and question developers for the attorneys or as acting coaches for the witnesses or as researchers to get additional information for the judge.
7. Have a student set designer and a design team that will put together an appropriate period costume for each character and a look for the classroom or auditorium where the trial will take place.
8. Hold at least one rehearsal and make certain that the students are comfortable in their role-play and the historic aspects of their characters and can improvise and work together as a community.
9. Have everyone, even the student design team, coaches, and set decorators wear period dress during the trial. Film it so that students can critique their faithfulness to historic accuracy, comment on the accuracy of their citation of 21st century procedural and evidentiary differences from the 1692 proceeding, and appraise their poise, articulation, and effectiveness in terms of their roles or as audience.
10. Have the Judge render his/her verdict.
11. Screen the video for the students and have them write their own verdicts and critique the effectiveness of the constitutional research done by attorneys, the performances and alignment with Schanzer's text by witnesses, and the verdict and demeanor of the Judge.

This is a fitting culmination of this study and can be uploaded to your school's web site. It can also be staged for several classes in the school auditorium, and actual public attorneys or private attorneys can be invited to this event or it can be staged for a neighborhood civic group.

**Other individual independent student reading or enrichment projects
for a literacy center might include:**

Reading *The Crucible* and comparing Miller's treatment of the Proctors and Abigail with the historical realities of *Witches*.

Comparing this work with Jane Yolen’s *The Salem Witch Trials* or Ann Turner’s fictive published in **2011** *Father of Lies* –a retelling of the Salem Witch trials.

Talented artists can try a graphic narrative approach to one of more chapters in the book or retelling the story of one of the accusers or witches.

Most important for training in citizenship and constitutional civil liberties alertness would be to have the students identify by photo montage and headlines from print or online sources, the ways in which certain events, litigation, and accusations today parallel or reflect the tone and evidentiary standards of 1692. That makes this a groundbreaking and authentic work , not only in terms of CCSS ELA and History Standards, but also in terms of educating our proactive and caring citizen students.

Appendix

The activities in this guide are aligned to the UDL guidelines and designed to support educators in providing multiple means of representation, action and expression and engagement for students with various learning styles.

UDL Educator Guidelines

1. Provide options for perception.
2. Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols
3. Provide options for comprehension
4. Provide options for physical action
5. Provide options for expression and communication
6. Provide options for executive function
7. Provide options for recruiting interest
8. Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence
9. Provide options for self regulation.