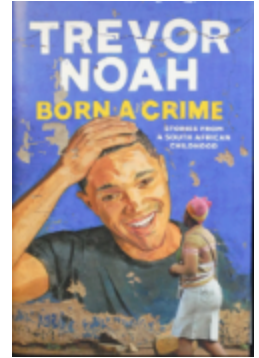


Born a Crime

By: Trevor Noah



Positive Learning Intention

- Book filled with life lessons, such as embracing failure and avoiding Regret and learning from pain and hardship'
- Overcoming serious adversity such as growing up in apartheid South Africa and the struggle to find his identity

Cautionary Material

- **Mention of Domestic Violence:** Highlighting the emotional abuse Noah's mother endured from her partner.
- **Oppression of Apartheid-Era in South Africa:** This speaks to the racial injustice of apartheid, which classified people based on their race and denied them basic rights.
- **Profanity:** The author uses profanity purposefully rather than excessively. The use of profanity serves several functions throughout the book, including adding authenticity and voice, and reflecting the theme of resistance throughout the book.

Excerpts to contextualize cautionary material:

- **Mention of Domestic Violence:** "My mother's boyfriend hit her. He beat her in ways I didn't understand. He would hit her, and she would take it. She would say nothing, never cry. And I could see the pain in her eyes, but she wouldn't say anything." Context: This passage highlights the emotional abuse Noah's mother endured from her partner. It opens a discussion on domestic violence, including the psychological toll it takes on the victim, as well as the children who witness it.
- **Oppression of Apartheid-Era in South Africa:** "In the eyes of the law, I was a crime. I was a mistake, a misfit. I wasn't supposed to exist." Context: This statement speaks to the racial injustice of apartheid, which classified people based on their race and denied them basic rights. The mention of Noah being considered "a crime" because of his mixed-race status underscores the absurdity and cruelty of apartheid policies, which dictated every aspect of life in South Africa.
- **Profanity:** "Fuck, the world doesn't care. You can be as good as you want, but the world doesn't give a shit. It's how much you can endure." Context: This moment shows how Noah's use of profanity reflects the raw, unfiltered emotions he experienced growing up. The harsh language conveys the frustration of living in a society where survival often means enduring injustice, rather than achieving success based on merit.

Domestic Violence:

- "In all the times I received beatings from my mom, I was never scared of her... The first time Abel hit me I felt something I had never felt before. I felt terror.

Oppression During Apartheid:

- "The genius of apartheid was convincing people who were the overwhelming majority to turn on each other. 'Apart hate,' is what it was."

Excerpts that reflect learning intentions:

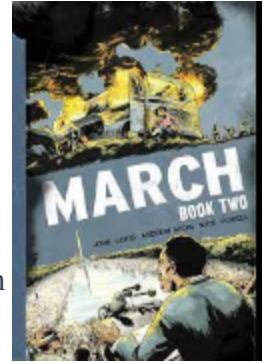
- **Embracing Failure and Avoiding Regret:** The following quote emphasizes the importance of taking risks and viewing failures as learning opportunities, rather than living with the uncertainty of unpursued possibilities. "We spend so much time being afraid of failure, afraid of rejection. But regret is the thing we should fear most. Failure is an answer. Rejection is an answer. Regret is an eternal question you will never have the answer to."
- **Learning from Pain and Hardship:** The author highlights the value of using past experiences as tools for personal growth and resilience, no matter how painful. "Learn from your past and be better because of your past... Life is full of pain. Let the pain sharpen you, but don't hold on to it. Don't be bitter."

Projects/Assignments that reflect learning intentions:

- **Life Lessons Scrapbook:** Objective: Encourages visual and textual analysis of key themes. Assignment: Create a scrapbook (digital or physical) where students choose five life lessons from *Born a Crime* and illustrate them using quotes from the book, images, artwork, or personal photos, and provide short reflections on how these lessons apply to their own lives
 - RL.9-10.3: Analyze how complex characters (e.g., Trevor Noah) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
 - W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **Personal Resilience Narrative:** Objective: Connect Noah's experiences to students' reflections on resilience and overcoming adversity. Assignment: Students write a personal essay or narrative about a challenge they have faced and how they overcame it.
 - W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
 - L.9-10.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

March: Book 2

By: John Lewis & Andrew Aydin



Positive Learning Intention

- The power of non-violent civil protest.
- People banding together to effect social change.
- Firsthand Perspective on the Civil Rights Movement
- Provides a personal and historical account through the eyes of Congressman fostering empathy and understanding of the fight for racial justice.
- Themes of Courage, Nonviolence, and Activism
- Explores the philosophy and practice of nonviolent resistance while highlighting the bravery required to confront systemic racism.
- Visual Storytelling & Literary Analysis
- Uses the graphic novel format to deepen comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis of historical and literary themes.

Cautionary Material

- Historically Accurate Violence against African Americans
- Derogatory Language (Contains historically accurate use of racial slurs and profanity to reflect the era and the hostile environment faced by civil rights activists.)
- Depictions of Violence and Brutality
- Includes images and descriptions of racial violence, such as beatings, police brutality, and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Excerpts to contextualize cautionary material:

Depictions of Violence and Brutality

Example excerpt (Birmingham Church Bombing)-“Four little girls were killed instantly.”

Context: This passage describes the real-life bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963. The imagery is factual and does not glorify violence but rather highlights the terror inflicted on Black communities during the fight for civil rights.

Strong Language and Racial Slurs

Example excerpt (Freedom Rides)-“N**r-lover! Go back to Africa!”

Context: This historically accurate language reflects the hate speech directed at Freedom Riders and civil rights activists. It serves as a discussion point on the power of language, historical accuracy, and the emotional impact of racial slurs.

Themes of Injustice, Racism, and Death

Example excerpt (Beaten and Arrested)-“They dragged us off the stools and beat us — men, women, and children alike.”

Context: This moment captures the brutal reality of nonviolent protests met with violent retaliation. It serves as a springboard for discussions about courage, injustice, and ethical resistance.

Excerpts that reflect learning intentions:

Firsthand Perspective on the Civil Rights Movement

(John Lewis Reflects on Training for Nonviolence)-“We were taught to protect each other, to cover our heads, and never to strike back.”

Why it matters: This shows students the intentional training behind nonviolent protest, fostering historical empathy and deepening understanding of activism.

Themes of Courage, Nonviolence, and Activism

(March on Washington)- “We march today for jobs and freedom, but we must never forget the real purpose of our struggle.”

Why it matters: This reinforces the broader themes of collective courage and long-term activism, highlighting the goals of the movement.

Visual Storytelling & Literary Analysis

(Freedom Ride Attack)

(A full-page panel shows a burning bus, smoke filling the air as activists escape.)

Why it matters: The use of imagery to convey violence and fear invites analysis of how visual storytelling can amplify emotional impact and deepen understanding of historical events.

Projects/Assignments that Reflect Learning Intentions:

Personal Narrative & Historical Connection

Assignment: Students write a personal narrative about a time they witnessed or stood up to injustice, connecting their experience to the courage shown by activists in March: Book Two.

- W.9-10.3 – Write narratives using effective technique, details, and structured sequences.
- RL.9-10.2 – Analyze the development of themes in a text.

Symbolism in Visual Storytelling

Assignment: Students analyze how John Lewis and the illustrators use visual techniques (shading, panel size, perspective) to enhance the emotional and historical impact of events, then create their own symbolic graphic panel representing a current social justice issue.

- RL.9-10.7 – Analyze how a subject is presented in different mediums.
- W.9-10.9 – Draw evidence from literary texts to support analysis.

Socratic Seminar on Ethical Resistance

Assignment: Students participate in a Socratic Seminar discussing the ethical dilemmas faced by John Lewis and other activists, such as whether nonviolence is always the right response to violence and oppression.

- SL.9-10.1 – Engage in collaborative discussions, building on others’ ideas.

Poet X

By: Elizabeth Acevedo



Positive Learning Intention

- The importance of being yourself
- Finding your own voice while standing against efforts to silence it
- Becoming comfortable with your own image

Cautionary Material

- **Physical Abuse:** The mother of the main character physically beats her daughter
- **Talk of Harassment/Bullying:** The main character is explaining how she is tired of men and boys touching her body, staring at her, or whispering about her.
- **Mild Profanity:** While the novel includes instances of profanity, they are contextually appropriate and contribute to the depth of Xiomara's character. The language underscores the intensity of her emotions and the gravity of the situations she encounters, making her story more relatable and impactful for readers.

Excerpts to contextualize cautionary material:

- **Excerpt of Physical Abuse:** *"And then Mami is standing in front of me, her face shadowed, the belt in her hand is raised. I don't even scream when it comes down. I bite my lip and taste blood. I think of all the times I've let myself go mute in anger. The times I have shaken with it. Instead of speaking. Instead of fighting. And it's not until I feel the leather against my skin again that I realize: I'm just like Mami."*
- **Excerpt of Harassment/Bullying:** "I'm sick and tired of men—and boys—thinking that they can touch me, that they can whisper in my ear, that they can stare."
- **Excerpts of Mild Profanity:** "I can't even tell you how much I want to say some slick shit back, but I just shake my head."

Excerpts that reflect learning intentions:

- **The Importance of Being Yourself:** Xiomara reflects on societal expectations and the limitations placed on individuals based on their appearance: "I think about all the things we could be if we were never told our bodies were not built for them." This passage emphasizes the significance of embracing one's true self, free from societal constraints.
- **Finding Your Own Voice While Standing Against Efforts to Silence It:** Xiomara discovers the liberating power of her own words: "I only know that learning to believe in the power of my own words has been the most freeing experience of my life." This quote underscores the empowerment that comes from self-expression and resisting suppression.
- **Becoming Comfortable with Your Own Image:** Xiomara confronts the challenges of body image and societal judgments: "When your body takes up more room than your voice, you're always the target of well-aimed rumors." This line highlights the struggle of being seen for one's physical appearance rather than one's true self, and the journey toward self-acceptance.

Projects/Assignments that reflect learning intentions:

- **The Power of Self-Expression & Poetry:** Students will write their own poetry in the style of Xiomara's verse, exploring themes such as identity, family, love, or personal struggles. Encourage them to perform their poems in a spoken word poetry slam to mirror Xiomara's journey of finding her voice.
 - Writing (W.9-10.3) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - Writing (W.9-10.4) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
 - Writing (W.9-10.10) Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
 - Reading (RL.9-10.3) Analyze how complex characters (e.g., Xiomara) develop over the course of a text, interact with others, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- **Thematic Spoken Word Performance:** After completing their journal entries, students can select a theme they explored in their journals (identity, family, etc.) and perform a spoken word piece that reflects their personal connection to the theme and Xiomara's transformation.
 - Speaking and Listening (SL.9-10.4) Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
 - Speaking and Listening (SL.9-10.6) Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when appropriate.
 - Language (L.9-10.5) Demonstrate an understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

The Midnight Library

By: Matt Haig



Positive Learning Intention

- The most important thing in life isn't success, pleasing others, or escaping regrets. It is simply to live with love and kindness for others and oneself.

Cautionary Material

- Attempted suicide
- Depression/Mental Illness

Excerpts to contextualize cautionary material:

Depression/Mental Illness- “Nora knew she was in the middle of the greatest failure of all. She had just tried to take her own life.” Early in the book – This is a key moment in the story when Nora Seed, the protagonist, attempts suicide and ends up in the Midnight Library. This scene is used to explore the impact of her struggles and to set the stage for the novel's examination of life's choices and regrets. “It wasn't that she didn't want to live, it was just that she couldn't see the point of living, not anymore.” Early in the book – Nora reflects on her deep feelings of depression, where her sense of purpose and meaning in life feels lost, a key aspect of her mental health struggle.

Excerpts that reflect learning intentions:

“The only way to learn is to live. And the only way to live is to love. Love is not a thing that you should wait for. It is something you have to give. And you have to give it to yourself, too.” Near the end of the book – As Nora reflects on her life choices and lessons learned in the Midnight Library, she realizes that life isn't about the pursuit of success or perfection. Instead, it's about embracing love, kindness, and compassion for both others and oneself.

Projects/Assignments that reflect learning intentions:

Creative Reflection Journal: Building Understanding Through Closeness

Students create a reflective journal from the perspective of Nora Seed as she navigates through the various lives in the Midnight Library.

- Reading: Literature (RL.9-10.3) Analyze how complex characters (e.g., Nora Seed) develop over the course of a text, interact with others, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- Writing (W.9-10.3) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Writing (W.9-10.4) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Speaking & Listening (SL.9-10.1) Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse

partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Hope and Healing Letter: Finding Hope During Challenging Times

Students write a letter of encouragement to someone who is struggling with their own version of Nora's emotional challenges (e.g., feelings of depression, regret, or confusion about life).

- Writing (W.9-10.2) Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Writing (W.9-10.3) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Speaking & Listening (SL.9-10.6) Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when appropriate.
- Language (L.9-10.1) Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Alternate Life Simulation: Observations of the Justice System

In a creative group project, students design an "alternate life" for Nora based on a system they feel strongly about (e.g., education, healthcare, justice, environmental conservation).

- **Reading: Informational Text (RI.9-10.3)** Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- **Writing (W.9-10.7)** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the topic under investigation.
- **Writing (W.9-10.9)** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **Speaking & Listening (SL.9-10.4)** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.