**Subject area/course**: English/Language Arts, English Literature

**Grade level/band**: 11–12

**Task source**: Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)

**Assessing *Wuthering Heights* as Representative of its Era**

**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

1. **Task overview**:

Students read the novel *Wuthering Heights* and analyze the major cultural issues that arise in the novel, including questions of race, class, and gender. Additionally, students may want to compare the elements of the romance between the couples (Catherine and Heathcliff, Catherine and Edgar, Isabella and Heathcliff, etc.). Any or all of these aspects could serve as comparison points with young-adult or contemporary fiction they have read previously. Note that the young adult or contemporary fiction should be appropriate for 11th-12th graders, keeping in mind the needs of your students.

1. **Aligned standards:**
2. **Primary Common Core State Standards**

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/2/) 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.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/4/) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/5/) Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/7/) 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 subject under investigation.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/9/) Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

1. **Critical abilities**

Analysis of Information**:** Integrate and synthesize multiple sources of information (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to address a question, make informed decisions, understand a process, phenomenon, or concept, and solve problems while evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Communication in Many Forms**:** Use oral and written communication skills to learn, evaluate, and express ideas for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting while considering the audience.

1. **Time/schedule requirements:**

Teachers should give students one to two weeks to read the novel, depending on the students’ capacity for reading. Reading the novel should be done outside of the classroom, preserving time in class for discussions about the reading.

Finally, students should have sufficient time to devise a thesis, marshal their evidence in support of it, and produce a draft. This draft could be work shopped in small groups for diction, syntax, organization, supporting detail, and use of rhetoric before turning in a finalized draft to the instructor.

1. **Materials/resources:**

* Students will need copies of *Wuthering Heights* and a contemporary novel of their choice.
* A critical edition of this novel will include a variety of essays that will help the instructor to articulate the different kinds of readings (feminist, Marxist, post-colonial, etc.) for the students during class discussion.

1. **Prior knowledge:**

Students should be able to:

* Understand the concepts of race, class, and gender.
* Make connections between texts.
* Gather supporting evidence from a text or texts.
* Formulate a thesis that is supported by evidence.

1. **Connection to curriculum:**

None listed.

1. **Teacher instructions:**

* This task is intended for use after a unit on *Wuthering Heights*. Follow your normal schedule for reading this novel, and include your normal assignments on analysis of the text as students read. Avoid assignments or class discussions specifically about critical interpretations of the novel so that students can explore that topic independently in this task.
* During one or more class sessions, you may serve as moderator for small-group discussions. These small groups could deliberate on specific points that you determine. You may ask a variety of questions regarding the portrayal of race, class, and/or gender. After each discussion, the small groups could report to the class at large.
* On other occasions, students could also brainstorm in small groups to assess the literary qualities of the story: the frame, the narrative strategies, the imagery, the central themes, etc. After students turn in their final essays, they could work in small groups to make a collection of comparisons between *Wuthering Heights* and contemporary books that they have read.

1. **Student support:**

The following suggestions are examples of scaffolding that can be used to meet the diverse student needs within the classroom.

* Provide class time for research on students’ topics.
* Provide definitions of new vocabulary words ahead of time.
* For the final product, all learners will benefit from peer assistance while brainstorming their topics, as well as a peer- or teacher-edit of their papers before final submission.
* Some students will have good research skills, but some will need guidance in the determination of appropriate sources and where to look for them. It is important to spend class time in review of what constitutes an appropriate source in advance of students’ independent work time.

1. **Extensions or variations:**

* Students could present the results of their research to the class via an oral or multi-media presentation.
* If there is a particularly interesting and/or controversial topic, a debate could be organized where students choose sides on the topic and defend their views.

1. **Scoring:**

Student work can be scored using the College and Career Ready (CCR) Task Bank rubric.