

# Connections

## A Guide for Teachers



*Connections* is a facilitated book discussion series for adult ESOL and basic education students featuring outstanding works of children's literature with universal themes. The Humanities Council pays for copies of the books for your students and the stipend for your facilitator. To begin:

- Check out the themes and titles at [nhhc.org/Connections.php](http://nhhc.org/Connections.php)
- Target the students, tutors, or other participants for your discussions.
- Select the location and dates. *Connections* is a four-session discussion series with a fifth closing evaluation discussion. You can choose to meet weekly, biweekly, or monthly.
- Fill in the one-page grant application and e-mail to [tfarish@nhhc.org](mailto:tfarish@nhhc.org). Send it at least four weeks before you want to begin the series to allow time for book ordering and delivering. Call or e-mail Terry at any time to discuss dates and possible facilitators for your program.
- The Humanities Council will send you a packet of evaluation forms. There are evaluation forms for the teacher, the facilitator, and for the fifth discussion which is an oral evaluation with a Humanities Council evaluator.
- Meet with your facilitator. Go over the needs and reading level of participants and other background information that will help her design her questions and activities.

### Tips for *Connections* Discussions

You'll receive copies of the books for your students before the series begins. Participants tell us they like to be familiar with the books and key vocabulary words before the facilitator leads the discussion. Many teachers read the books aloud and create vocabulary lists in advance of the discussion. Students keep copies of the books!

Refreshments and name tags help participants feel welcome and add to the sense of celebration around *Connections* discussions. Plan this with your facilitator or students.

**Create a simple flyer** or handout for your students with dates and books for each of the four sessions.

**Evaluation Forms.** We need to hear your stories about what works, how students' reading was impacted, the value of a particular book. Your comments and statistics on the evaluation form are essential for our continued funding of the program.

**Books for all.** If you received more books than the number of students who participated, please give the extras to the evaluator at the final discussion. These books will be used for future programs.

**Words and Art.** If your students create poems, art, or small stories or essays as part of the *Connections* series, please share. We have a website and want to showcase yours and your students' work with facilitators and other teachers. Please e-mail to [tfarish@nhhc.org](mailto:tfarish@nhhc.org)