

Entwined Notions

By Veda Stamps

Illustrated by Maddie Saunders

Curriculum developed and copy edited by Léna Garcia



OVERVIEW

Quick-Glance 10 Points for Usage Guide

Student Population	
Age/Grade-Level Appropriateness	12+, 7th+
Genre/s	* Fiction * Historical Fiction
Length	* 1,451 words
Content Advisories	* Brief cursing * Reference to suicide * Racially charged language and mention of racially motivated violence
One-Sentence Summary	Recalling prejudiced scenes from her life, a grandmother speaks out to prevent her family's fear-fueled history from affecting her grandson.
Lesson Planning	

<p>Topics & Key Themes Overview</p>	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Family * Prejudice * Civil Rights * Pain * Loss * Masculinity * Fear <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Creating with your hands * Following your heart * Learning from previous generations * First- and second-generation Americans * Being of mixed-race ancestry * Sexual identity * The pressure to fit in
<p>Historic Events/Time Period for Study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pre-WWII Japanese immigration to California * 1950s United States * Japanese internment in the U.S. during WWII: Tule Lake Internment Camp, Gila River War Relocation Center * Montgomery bus boycott of 1955 and the Civil Rights Movement
<p>Complementary Classic & Historic Texts</p>	<p>Poem: "Be Like the Cactus" by Kimii Nagata</p>
<p>Author & Artist Information</p>	<p>Veda Stamps is the author of the middle-grade novel <i>Flexible Wings</i>, the co-owner of The Ramsay Group, and an MPA candidate at USC living in Santa Clarita, California.</p> <p>Maddie Saunders is an artist living in Glendale, California.</p>
<p>Key Common Core Standards (found in detail following the curriculum)</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3.B; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3.D; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.8</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.6</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.A; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.C; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.D; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.5.B; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.6</p>

Author Biography

Veda Stamps is the author of the middle-grade novel *Flexible Wings*. She also co-owns The Ramsay Group, a community-planning consulting firm. She was born in Los Angeles, California but grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana. She received her BA in Sociology at California State University, Fresno and is currently completing her MPA at the University of Southern California. Veda spent time in Washington, D.C., where she served as a legislative aide and speechwriter to Congressman Harold Ford, Jr. She currently lives in Valencia, California with her husband, two daughters, and three little dogs.

Artist Biography

Maddie Saunders is currently enrolled full-time as a student at ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, where she is also a teaching assistant. She has participated in numerous gallery shows around Los Angeles over the last few years. Her wacky sense of humor can be seen in the illustrations she creates. She lives in Glendale, California.

SYNOPSIS

Recalling prejudiced moments in her own life, grandmother Yuri speaks out to prevent her family's fear-fueled history from affecting her grandson. Despite her own son's intolerances, Yuri empowers a creative, empathetic, and open-minded young person to follow his heart. This short fiction story, rich in history, evokes the power of making things, of standing out, and of doing the right thing.

CURRICULUM

Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

Topic

Writing:

Drawing on Internet research, explore the psychological debate of nature versus nurture—whether human behavior is influenced solely by genetics or by one's environment.

In a one-page expository essay, explore how family influences a child's personality. When we are born, what do we come into the world knowing about ourselves? What do we learn from society and our parents? Cite at least one reputable Internet source.

Main Ideas

Journaling:

In a 10-minute journal entry, respond to the following questions: Why do we create with our hands? What human urge do you think we fulfill when we paint, write, sculpt, or knit?

Passage-Specific Themes

Discussion:

Read the following passage from "Entwined Notions." Discuss the questions below in small groups or as a class:

As Yuri nodded her appreciation, she noticed Frank, Jr., standing at the sliding door between the house and patio, glaring down at his son. She studied his face, trying to decipher the emotion. Was it anger? No. Contempt? No. Then she recognized it: one eyebrow raised, three rapid blinks, two quick clicks of the neck. Baachan Yuri sucked her teeth in defiance. It was an expression as familiar to her as rain.

It was fear.

Glancing up, Joshua saw his father and leaped from his chair, still holding the two sticks and pink

and green yarn. His father rushed over, knocking the needles from Joshua’s hands.

Question One: What do you think is going on here?

Question Two: Based on what you’ve read, what do you think is going to happen in the story?

Universal Themes

Journaling:

Explore the following questions in a 15-minute journal entry:

For young people, how strong is the pressure to fit in? Do you think your generation deals with more, less, or the same level of peer pressure as did your parents or grandparents’?

Is it possible that what’s popular has changed but that peer pressure remains as strong as ever? What recent news stories, academic studies, or popular culture phenomenons help you answer this question?

Key Vocabulary

Definitions are context-dependent. Make sure any definitions you look up or work from are the ones that most correctly fit in the context of the story.

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
perch	entwined	purling
soothed	notions	marshland
stitch (knitting)	broach (v.)	shallows
eccentric	cumin	russet (adj.)
experimentation	coriander	red-crowned crane (a rare East Asian crane with a patch of red on its head that is known, in some places, as a symbol of longevity, fidelity, and luck) Source: http://bit.ly/1LSRV4X
contempt	cardamon	Hokkaido, Japan (the second-largest and northernmost Japanese island)
defiance	bastard	Tule Lake Internment Camp (a WWII internment camp in Siskiyou County, near the small town of Tukulake, which from 1942-46 forcibly held 18,000 people of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of whom were American citizens) Source: http://lat.ms/2tkfXnq

rebellion	empathetic	Gila River War Relocation Center (a WWII internment camp forcibly built on the Gila River Indian Reservation, located about 30 miles southeast of Phoenix, Arizona, which incarcerated 13,000 Japanese Americans from 1942-45) Sources: http://bit.ly/2uog9Hm ; http://bit.ly/2uog9Hm
rapid	sucker punch (transitive verb)	Baachan (slang for grandmother)
slaughtered	cascading	Dvořák concerto
sensitive	clasping	geisha
pearl	furrowed	
fish (v.)	free spirit	
CEO	flush (n.)	

Vocabulary Activity Options

1. In the story, “sensitive,” “empathetic,” “beautiful,” and “russet” are adjectives applied to Jonathan. If any of these words are unfamiliar, write down their dictionary definition.

Next, set a timer for one minute. List as many synonyms as you can for each adjective.

Now, use at least four new adjectives to write a five- to seven-sentence-long character description of Yuri’s grandson. What does he look like knitting with his grandmother?

2. Veda Stamps uses language specific to place in order to articulate Yuri’s relationship with her mother. Using the vocabulary list, create a sub-list of words particular to 1940s Japanese American culture.

After looking up each word in the dictionary—it can help to see a picture via Google Images—try your hand at using several to write a poem which captures the feeling of the era. You may wish to draw inspiration from Maddie Saunders’ illustration of red-crowned cranes.

3. Research the etymology of the transitive verb “sucker punch.” Where and when did the word originate, and what does it mean? Write your own complex sentence using the word.

Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

1. Why did Yuri’s mother reject her daughter’s decision to marry Frank, Sr.?
2. What made Frank, Sr., take his own life?
3. What do you think Joshua is struggling with? Is it the pressure to fit in, his person, his sexuality, or something else?

4. Yuri Kochiyama (1921-2014) was a Japanese-American Civil Rights activist who—like Stamps’ main character, Bachaan Yuri—was interned in a camp during WWII.

Working from what you’ve read about Bachaan Yuri, why or why don’t you think the author intended her name as a reference to Yuri Kochiyama?

Text-Dependent Question Options

1. Why did Stamps choose to title this piece “Entwined Notions”? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. How is Jonathan “the spitting image of [Baachan’s] rebellion against her parents’ biases”?
3. What does Yuri remember about her time at Tule Lake Internment Camp? What surprised her about the camp? Reference the text.
4. How is *Baachan* Yuri “a free spirit” and how is Joshua? Point to specific moments in the text to support your response.
5. Stamps’ writing is rich in simile and metaphor. What might knitting be an extended metaphor for in the story?
6. Why did Saunders chose to illustrate the red-crowned cranes rather than another moment in Stamps’ piece? How does the illustration tie in multiple ideas from the story? Which concepts do you think the art represents?
7. What prejudices do the characters in this story wrestle with and why? Why has *Baachan* Yuri decided to not act with prejudice, and what are the benefits to that choice?

Writing Exercises

Narrative

Write Jonathan’s internal monologue. What thoughts are going through his head as he knits with his *Baachan*? Articulate what he feels he can’t share with anyone else.

Descriptive

With the utmost detail, as though you were explaining the scene to someone who is blind, describe the story’s main setting in one to two paragraphs. Where do Yuri and Jonathan sit and knit? What does the house and the patio look like? In what area of the United States is the story set?

Use your imagination, as well as concrete details from the story.

Analysis

From a psychological point of view, further analyze Frank, Jr.’s, fearful reaction to his son knitting. Write a one- to two-page essay in which you investigate what it is about Jonathan’s hobby, as well as his nail-painting experiment, that make his father so uncomfortable?

Complementary Reading Text

Read the following poem by a child, Kimii Nagata, whose c. 1945 piece speaks to perseverance and hope in the context of her internment at the Gila River War Relocation Center, an Arizona internment camp forcibly built on the Gila River Indian Reservation, which held 13,000 Japanese Americans from 1942-45:

Be Like the Cactus
By Kimii Nagata
Let not harsh tongues, that wag
in vain,
Discourage you. In spite of
pain,
Be like the cactus, which through
rain,
And storm, and thunder, can
remain.

Writing Exercise

Both Yuri and the poem's speaker are processing pain. "Be Like the Cactus" offers a lesson to the reader, just as Yuri does to her son.

Nagata writes, "Let not harsh tongues, that wag / in vain, / Discourage you."

How is this similar or different from Yuri's hopes for her grandson, Joshua? How is Yuri "like the cactus"? In contrast, which characters in "Entwined Notions" are not so?

Activity Options

Classroom Activity One

Teach students to finger knit—or, if feeling ambitious, to knit or crochet—a simple scarf or pot holder. (Note: Here's a link to a seven-minute finger knitting YouTube tutorial: <http://bit.ly/1lyTFuR>)

Suggested Material: Yarn, scissors, (optional: crochet hooks or knitting needles)

Five-Minute Quickwrite: Reflect on the process of creating a project using only your hands and a few materials. How did you feel learning a fiber art skill? How was the experiences similar or different from learning a new academic skill?

Classroom Activity Two

Assign small groups one of three ideas on which to write a haiku: family, loss, and civil rights. Within the themed-groups, student pairs may either collaborate on a poem or work independently.

Haiku (n.): an unrhymed verse form of Japanese origin having three lines containing usually five, seven, and five syllables, respectively.

Follow-up Discussion: How difficult was it to compress a large idea into seventeen syllables? In your poem, what did you choose to focus on and why?

Home Activity

Create a visual representation of “Entwined Notions.” Choose your medium (collage, drawing, fiber arts, digital, etc.) Be ready to justify to the class how your form matches the story’s content.

Guest Speaker

Option One: Invite the author, Veda Stamps—who lives in Valencia—to answer questions about Yuri’s character and to speak about her current projects, as well as how she discovered her love for storytelling.

Option Two: Ask the artist, Maddie Saunders, to speak to the class about how she created the artwork for “Entwined Notions,” as well as what she does, how she works, and her background in art.

Option Three: Invite a staff member from the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) to speak about the concept of civil rights in America.

Field Trip

Visit the Japanese American National Museum, whose permanent collection includes photographer Jack Iwata’s images of Tule Lake internment camp, alongside drawings and postcards by other artists memorializing the Japanese internment experience.

Follow-up Writing Activity: How did the photographs, writing, and artwork you saw make you feel? What’s the difference between hearing about history and seeing it? Respond in a 10-minute journal entry.

TEST PREPARATION COMPONENT

Instructions: Closely read this passage from “Entwined Notions,” using the graphic organizer to develop your thoughts.

Text:

The memory dragged black pearls of pain to the surface, pearls that had been buried so deeply they startled Yuri. Those were dark days for America. *Dark days for me.* Images flooded her mind. Buses loaded with her family and friends, hundreds of Japanese leaving their homes and neighbors, barbed wire fences, and the redundant smell of boiled potatoes that perfumed walls of the mess hall three times a day. Tule Lake Internment. *Why was it called Tule Lake? Where was the lake?* She remembered only dirt. Dirt everywhere. No matter how hard she fought it, Yuri couldn’t stop one memory from rising to the surface: her mother’s face streaming with tears. It was the last day she’d seen her mother alive.

Yuri closed her eyes and let the old wounds be soothed by the trickling sounds of the fountain and the scents of nearby lemon blossoms. *Why didn’t she just accept my choice?*

<p>Who is telling the story and why?</p> <p>What is their point of view?</p> <p>Their tone?</p>	<p>Unpack a few resonant words the author uses to tell her story:</p> <p>What other rhetorical choices are made and why?</p>
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<p>What is memorable about the characters?</p>	<p>What is/are the main idea(s)?</p>
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Writing Activity: Write a one-page analysis of the narrator’s perspective in this passage from “Entwined Notions.” What experiences have Yuri lived through that influence her character and her point of view? Cite the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4: Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

Vocabulary Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 7 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.A: Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.C: Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.4.D: Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.5.B: Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.C: Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.D: Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

Text-Dependent Question Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.6: Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Writing Exercise Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3.B: Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3.D: Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

Complementary Reading Text (Comparative Writing Exercise)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.5: Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.