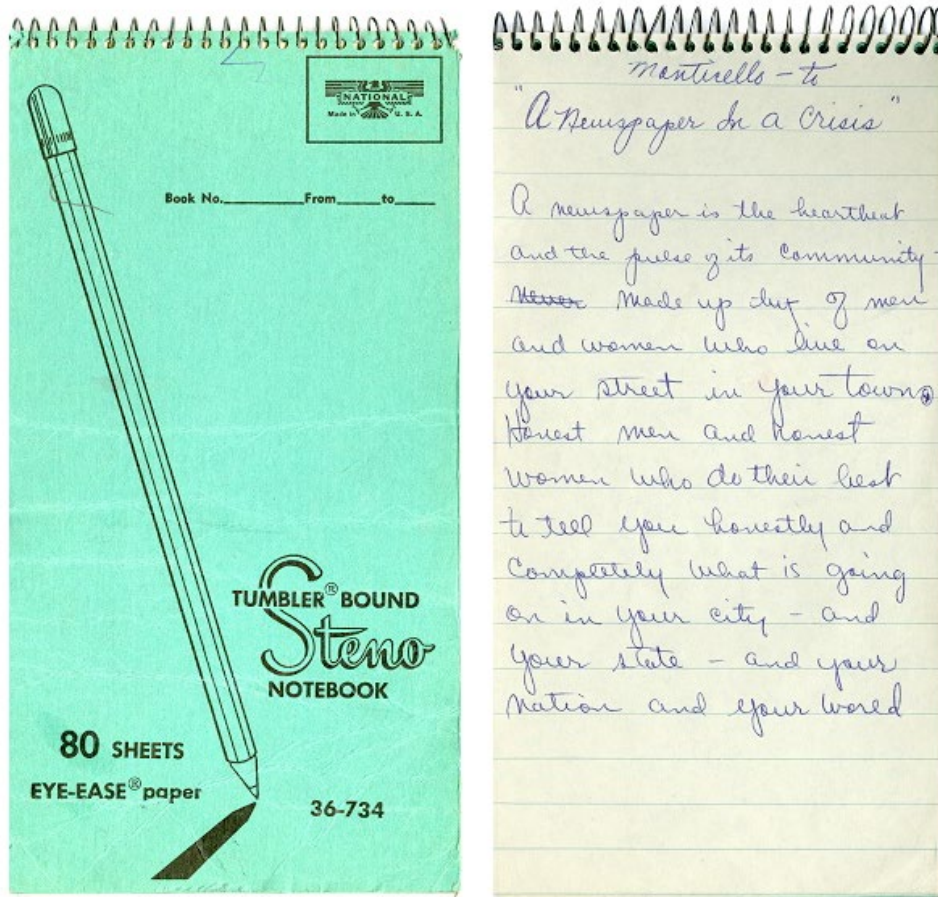


MINI LESSON

Writing About National Narratives



Vivian Castleberry Collection / The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza

Grade

6th – 8th

Time

15–20 minutes

Brief Synopsis

Students will create a narrative about a nationally significant or traumatic event he or she remembers in his or her lifetime covered by the media on a national or international level.

Learning Objective

The student will compose a narrative that is meaningful and representative of a nationally significant or traumatic event he or she remembers.

Essential Question

How do individuals effectively create a narrative depicting personal experiences about nationally significant or traumatic events?

Historic Context

Vivian Castleberry, a writer and women's activist, joined the *Dallas Times Herald* in 1956 as the women's editor. The first woman appointed to the editorial board, she made a great impact on Dallas and the entire newspaper industry. Castleberry wrote notes in an eighteen-page green Steno notebook on November 22, 1963, the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. The notes at the beginning of the notebook are about Jacqueline Kennedy, her previous speeches, her appearance and voice. Her notes include reactions from people at the Trade Mart after the news of President Kennedy's death was announced. The last few pages have notes and quotes about President Johnson and hopes for the country in the future.

On November 22, 1963, Ms. Castleberry received a telegram from Nan Rajnovich of the *Sault Ste. Marie Daily Star* asking her to submit 400 words on the events of the day. Subsequently, Castleberry wrote a four-page draft of an article about the assassination of President Kennedy and the mood in the city of Dallas that afternoon. The article included her observations during and after the assassination of President Kennedy. See the four-page draft of [Castleberry's article on eMuseum](#).

An accomplished author of books such as *Daughters of Dallas: A History of Greater Dallas through the Voices and Deeds of Its Women* and *Seeds of Success*, she continuously wrote about women's issues and used her voice to advocate for women's rights. Throughout her progressive literary career, Ms. Castleberry won seventeen major journalism awards, became the namesake of the University of North Texas Castleberry Peace Institute and was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 1984.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies (TEKS)

Grade 6 English Language Arts and Reading

§110.22. (b) (11)(A) compose literary texts such as personal narratives, fiction, and poetry using genre characteristics and craft.

Grade 7 English Language Arts and Reading

§110.23. (b) (11)(A) compose literary texts such as personal narratives, fiction, and poetry using genre characteristics and craft.

Grade 8 English Language Arts and Reading

§110.24 (b) (11)(A) compose literary texts such as personal narratives, fiction, and poetry using genre characteristics and craft.

Materials

1. Draft of Vivian Castleberry's November 22, 1963 article
<http://bit.ly/3bDMC0t>
2. Article: Rachel M. Gunter, "Castleberry, Vivian Lou Anderson," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed March 24, 2021, tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/castleberry-vivian-lou-anderson.
Published by the Texas State Historical Association.
3. [Living History interview](#) of Vivian Castleberry, Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza
Runtime: 5:09 minutes

Teacher Instructions:

1. Share and discuss the biography of Vivian Castleberry by Rachel Gunter.
2. Have students listen to the clip of Castleberry's Living History and read the draft article Vivian Castleberry wrote about the assassination of President Kennedy.
3. Ask students to respond to the following questions
 - a. Who was Ms. Castleberry's audience?
 - b. What were the main details Ms. Castleberry was trying to share?
 - c. How did she convey what the mood was like in Dallas after the assassination of President Kennedy?
 - d. Is the article composed of all facts, all personal recollections or a combination of the two? How does that affect the reporting?
4. Have students follow the instructions on the following worksheet.

