

# ***Nervous Conditions* by Tsitsi Dangarembga** (Published by Seal Press)

Approved for use in Honors Communication Arts I

## **Summary**

This is a coming of age story of a girl living in Africa in the 1960's. The colonization this female protagonist encounters contributes to racial tension as well as class struggles. The central conflict in this memoir deals with this young girl's quest for advancement from her primitive existence to an educated, civilized way of life. Through the various relationships, she understands the challenges of different lifestyles and moves from an idealistic perspective to a more realistic view of life.

## **Connection to the Curriculum**

*Nervous Conditions* provides an example of an extended memoir that all freshmen write. The main character's growth can be examined as well. This novel offers a cultural perspective along with a female protagonist. Young adults will relate to the character's rebellion, the desire to improve her status, and the need to seek independence. The text uses an advanced vocabulary giving students an opportunity to expand their language skills.

## **Standards**

### **Course Objectives (Benchmarks)**

**Reading:** 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary.

**Literature:** 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

**Writing:** 3.1- The students use writing as a tool for learning throughout the curriculum.

### **Possible Skills Taught (Indicators):**

#### **Reading:**

1.2.1- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.3.2- The student determines the meaning of words or phrases using context clues from sentences or paragraphs.

1.3.4- The student determines the meaning of words through structural analysis using knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots, prefixes, and suffixes to understand complex words.

1.3.5- The student identifies, interprets, and analyzes the use of figurative language.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading the text.

1.4.11- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

#### **Literature:**

2.2.6- The student recognizes ways that literature from different cultures presents similar themes differently across genres.

2.2.7- The student compares and contrasts works of literature that deal with similar topics and problems.

#### **Writing:**

3.2- The student uses a writing process that includes preparing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing to produce a written text.

3.3- The student uses ideas that are well developed, clear, and interesting.

3.4- The student uses organization that enhances the reader's understanding.

3.5- The student uses authentic and appropriate voice.

3.6- The student uses effective word choice.

3.7- The student uses clear and fluent sentences.

3.8- The student uses standard American English conventions.

3.9- The student uses a variety of modes of writing for different purposes and audiences.

## **A Note on the Text**

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*The story of this young girl includes honest discussions of the issues she faces. Although the main character may seem somewhat rebellious, she is desperately seeking a better, more educated existence than that of her parents.*

## **AP Connections**

The advanced vocabulary used by the author will challenge honors readers to employ good reading strategies.

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities