Whose Story Is Missing?

FIVE CONNECTED COMMITMENTS ONE THOUGHTFUL PLACE TO START.

A Teaching the Unwritten™ Curriculum Check

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Whose Story Is Missing?

A TEACHING THE UNWRITTEN™ CURRICULUM CHECK

Before students ever answer a question, we've already made choices: the sources they encounter, the voices they hear, the context they receive, and the questions they're allowed to ask. Those choices shape how they understand the world—and their place in it.

I'm Abeer Ramadan-Shinnawi, an educator and founder of Altair Education Consulting. With more than 20 years in education, I bring classroom experience, curriculum expertise, and lived experience to this work. I know what it means to search for yourself in what you are taught. That experience shapes the questions I ask and the learning I help others create. I created this guide for teachers, instructional coaches, curriculum leaders, and school teams ready to examine a lesson, text, or unit closely. It offers a starting point for examining whose knowledge is valued, how people are represented, and whether students have opportunities to investigate history with depth and evidence.

Our commitments guide how we work.

The Unwritten Framework™ guides how we examine and design curriculum.

Centering community, cultivating equity, building partnerships, exploring innovation, and prioritizing reflection shape every Altair collaboration. Within that work, **The Unwritten Framework™** helps us examine whose voices are present, where information comes from, how events connect across time, what questions require deeper investigation, and how research becomes accessible classroom learning.

Together, these commitments guide Teaching the Unwritten™: examining overlooked narratives and the systems that have shaped whose stories reach our classrooms.

Start with one lesson. Ask a sharper question. Make one thoughtful change.

EVERY CURRICULUM CHOOSES WHOSE STORIES MATTER. WHAT IS YOURS TEACHING STUDENTS TO NOTICE—AND WHAT IS IT TEACHING THEM TO OVERLOOK?

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COMMITTMENT	QUESTIONS TO ASK	SMALL ACTION TO TAKE
Centering Community	Whose lived experiences help shape this lesson?	Add a community-authored source that deepens students' understanding
Cultivating Equity	Who comes across as a thinker, leader, or decision-maker, and who comes across only as someone defined by hardship and perceived deficits?	Examine how the lesson represents people's agency, complexity, and everyday lives.
Building Partnerships	Who could help us teach this history with greater depth and accuracy?	Identify a museum, scholar, community organization, or cultural institution to learn from.
Exploring Innovation	What are students being asked to investigate?	Turn one recall question into an inquiry question that requires evidence.
Prioritizing Reflection	What assumptions might students leave with?	Add an exit prompt: "What did this lesson complicate or change about your thinking?"

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THE UNWRITTEN FRAMEWORK™

Teaching the Unwritten. Empowering Every Story.

NARRATIVE MULTIPLICITY

We center multiple voices and lived experiences to build richer, more inclusive narratives.



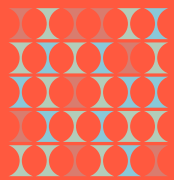
SOURCE TRANSPARENCY

We examine where information comes from and why it matters.



PATTERN ARCHITECTURE

Every teaching unit connects to a larger pattern across time and context.



PRODUCTIVE AMBIGUITY

We lean into complexity and questions that spark deeper thinking.



SCHOLARSHIP TRANSLATION

We ground learning in rigorous research and translate it for real-world accessibility.



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Planning Space

The lesson or resource I am examining_____	**A missing perspective or oversimplification I noticed: ___**	**The evidence or partnership I need: ___**
The change I will make: ___	**How I'll know it deepened student thinking: ___**	**How can I build on this lesson for the next lesson_____**

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The Framework in Action: Who Gets to Belong? Students apply **The Unwritten Framework™** by comparing community voices, examining each source's origins, connecting policy to patterns over time, investigating the complexity of belonging, and using historical research to support their conclusions.

Starting lesson: Students list reasons people immigrated to the United States.

Revised inquiry: *How have immigration policies shaped who gets to belong in the United States?*

Students investigate Arab American experiences using an immigrant's oral history, a community newspaper excerpt, and a relevant immigration policy excerpt. They identify when and why each source was created, then compare how people described their lives with how the policy defined access or eligibility.

Teacher note: Arab American experiences vary across time, national origin, race, religion, and immigration status. One person's account offers a perspective, not a story that represents everyone.

Five commitments shape the investigation:
Centering Community: Students hear Arab Americans describe their own experiences.
Cultivating Equity: They examine people's choices, contributions, and organizing alongside the barriers they faced.
Building Partnerships: The teacher draws on an Arab American museum or community archive for sources and context.
Exploring Innovation: Students investigate a question and develop a claim using evidence.
Prioritizing Reflection: They revisit their assumptions about immigration and belonging.

The shift: Students connect individual experiences to the systems shaping them —and recognize immigrants as people who helped shape American life.

Evidence-based response: "Using one community source and one policy excerpt, explain how policy shaped an opportunity or barrier for the people you studied."

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WHAT WILL YOU TEACH DIFFERENTLY?

At Altair Education Consulting, my five connected commitments and The Unwritten Framework™ are designed around your students, educators, and community:

Curriculum Design & Review: Develop or strengthen lessons and units through meaningful inquiry, credible sources, and deeper attention to overlooked narratives and historical systems.

Teacher Coaching: Work through instructional choices together, from selecting sources and framing questions to examining student thinking.

Professional Learning: Create space for educators to investigate, reflect, and apply new learning to their practice.

Ready to look more closely at what your curriculum leaves unwritten? Work with Altair on curriculum design, teacher coaching, and professional learning.



Abeer Ramadan-Shinnawi, MEd.

Start a Conversation with Altair

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