

## **Will the Real Solomon Carter Fuller Please Stand Up?**

### **Lesson Plan**

#### **I. Massachusetts Curriculum Framework Standards Grade 4**

**4.15B** Describe the diverse nature of the American people by identifying the distinctive contributions to American culture of African Americans, including an explanation of their early concentration in the South because of slavery and the great migration to northern cities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and recent African immigrant groups and where they tended to settle in large numbers.

#### **II. Student Objectives**

- Students will incorporate words in a word splash in sentences to demonstrate their perceived meanings.
- Students will compare and contrast their contextual usage to that of an article containing the same words.
- Students will draw conclusions about why their interpretations differ from the realities of Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller's life.
- Students will identify the distinctive contributions of Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller to American culture.
- Students will analyze the change over time that existed for the Fuller family.
- Students will relate their experiences from a variety of activities to a phrase/idiom of their choice.

#### **III. Pedagogical Technique: Critical Thinking Skills**

#### **IV. Materials**

- Solomon Carter Fuller Word Splash
- Solomon Carter Fuller Student Article
- Belief verses Reality Graphic Organizer
- Relating Idioms to Life (activity sheet)
- Fuller Timeline

#### **V. Lesson Procedures**

**A. Introduction:** This lesson can be taught over several class periods and broken into segments based on the length of periods and student ability. It is recommended that the lesson be divided into three separate days.

##### **B. Day 1: Word Splash/Solomon Carter Fuller Article**

1. Divide students into groups of 3 to 4 students. Explain to students that they will be working in cooperative teams to create sentences using words

they may or may not have seen before about Solomon Carter Fuller. Students may have heard about Fuller with a connection to Fuller Middle School, one of Framingham's three middle schools or may have little or no knowledge. Working together as a group, students will create sentences using one or more words. Sentences are to make sense and demonstrate student perception about meaning.

2. Distribute to each student a copy of the word splash. The word splash may also be presented on large chart paper or on an overhead transparency. Using the word splash, students will work in groups to formulate sentences. All words are to be used.
3. Three roles will be assumed by students in each cooperative group: recorder, reader, and checker. In groups of four, two students may assume one of these roles, thus sharing the responsibility. Have students decide who will assume which role before sentence writing begins.
4. Sentences written by each group will be listed on a sheet of paper by the recorder(s) of the group. When all words are used within sentences, each group may then share their sentences (presented by the readers in the groups).
5. The article on Solomon Carter Fuller should then be distributed to each student. Readers from each group will present the article while the checker will place an "X" by the sentences that do not support the meaning/usage of the word as it relates to Fuller, a "✓" where students' contextual meaning matches that of the article, and a "?" where students cannot prove or disprove if their statement matches with the context of the article.

### **C. Day 2: Belief Verses Reality/Analyzing Idioms**

1. Distribute the sheet "Belief Verses Reality. Have students review the sentences formulated in the last class and determine their belief about each term and phrase as it related to Fuller. For example, in consideration of the term "slave" did students consider that Fuller was a slave? Was this a prevalent assumption among students in the class? Students are to write their initial perception for each term and phrase in the belief column. Students will then write the reality of the term/phrase based on information presented in the article. Students will compare their beliefs to the realities of Fuller's life and identify which beliefs proved incorrect and what conclusions can they draw about the life of African immigrant groups.
2. Idioms provide an opportunity for students to evaluate daily sayings or expressions and how they impact their point of view. Distribute the idiom activity sheet. Allow students an opportunity to select an idiom of their choice and analyze how the idiom connects to this activity about beliefs verses reality.

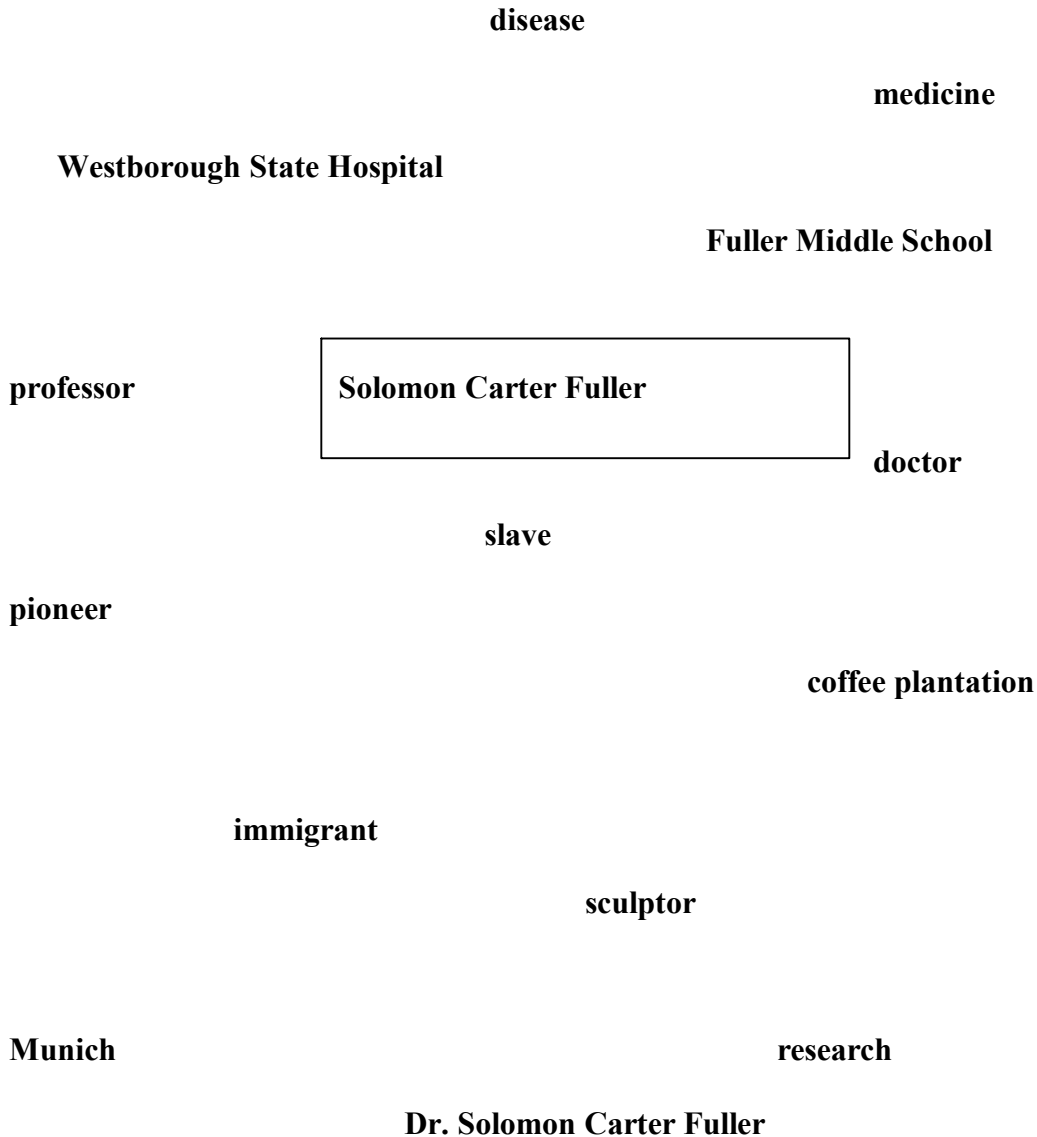
### **D. Day 3: Fuller Timeline**

1. Given a timeline organizer, have students read the background information article about Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller's life and select notable events and corresponding dates. Students should list the information in chronological order on the timeline.
2. Have students analyze the timeline of events focusing on the change over time experienced by Fuller and his family. What current event can students relate to Fuller's life? Have students select a current event and compare and contrast the two.

**Word Splash**

**Liberia, West Africa**

**freedom**



Solomon Carter Fuller, an immigrant from Liberia, West Africa, worked vigorously and achieved to a degree that that no one believed possible for a man of color during a time of segregation. Fuller was the grandson of John Lewis Fuller, a former slave who bought his freedom in Virginia and emigrated with his wife, a white former indentured servant, to Liberia. It is there where John Fuller entered into the tobacco and brick making business working his way to prosperity. The first Solomon Fuller, John's son, became a large landowner as well as a government official in Liberia. Therefore, the second Solomon grew up under privileged circumstances, receiving his early education at the school located on his father's coffee plantation. At the age of seventeen traveled by boat from Liberia to America to further his education and become a great scientist. He enrolled in Livingstone College located in South Carolina.

After graduating Livingstone College in 1893, Fuller entered the Long Island College Hospital Medical School studying for a short time before transferring to Boston University School of Medicine where he earned his medical degree. His interest in medicine stemmed from his maternal grandparents who were medical missionaries in Liberia. A two-year internship brought Fuller to Westborough State Hospital, an affiliated organization of Boston University, where he joined the staff and developed an interest in the mental and neurological conditions of psychiatric patients. Fuller was appointed Pathologist to the hospital upon completion of his internship, and became an instructor of Pathology at Boston University).

In Fuller's quest to advance his technical skills of brain diseases, he turned to Edward K. Dunham, professor at Bellview Hospital Medical Center in New York City. It is with Dunham that Fuller hoped to become informed of techniques in recording the histories of patients, gain further insight into the study of bacteriology and autopsy. In search of post-graduate education, Fuller soon saw the advantages of study abroad. Research was viewed as a luxury in America at this time, so Fuller traveled abroad in 1904 to the University of Munich where he became one of five foreign visiting students serving as an assistant for brain research to Alzheimer. Fuller brought the wealth of information learned in Munich back with him to the United States in 1905 at which time he resumed his role as Westborough State Hospital's neuropathologist.

In 1908, Dr. Fuller met Meta Vaux Warrick, and after a brief courtship, the two were married making their home in Framingham where they raised their three sons, Solomon III, Perry James and William Thomas. Originally from Philadelphia, Meta Vaux Warrick was a recognized sculptress and a renowned individual in the Harlem Renaissance. She studied in Paris where her work was praised by Auguste Rodin. Even after their marriage, Meta kept on with her sculpting, and eventually had a studio located a short distance from the house where she worked and taught. Cofounder of the Dramatic Club and active in church affairs. Their home became a lively gathering place for black intellectuals and professionals for, other than private homes, there were few places where black people could gather. Often visitors came to the Fuller home to gain a sense of balance and strength (Graves, 24).

Fuller's balance and strength not only emerged in his personal character, but in his reputation as pioneer in the area of senile dementia. The demand for his expertise was sought by many institutions including Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts and the Veteran's Hospital at Tuskegee, Alabama. Clark University had become the center of study of psychology in the United States. It was the director and biology professor of the institution, G. Stanley Hull, who was impressed with Fuller's material on autopsy and, therefore, looked toward Fuller to incorporate human pathology into their courses since their focus had solely involved that of animal study. The university sponsored a conference that simultaneously occurred at the time of Sigmund Freud's only visit to America. Pictured at the conference are the distinguished American and foreign psychologists and psychoanalysts of which Fuller is the only African American. In Alabama, Fuller helped to develop the Veteran's Hospital for the purpose of providing medical care for black veterans in the segregated south. While Fuller did not work at the hospital himself, he was instrumental in training the black psychiatry staff, thus further opening the door of opportunity for blacks in the field of psychiatry. It was Fuller's lifelong passion to, "both teach and to search out the causes of things" (Graves, 81).

In 1919, Fuller transferred his research activities to Boston University Medical School. As the only African American on the medical school faculty, Fuller was not officially placed on the payroll nor did he possess the formal title of head of the Department of Neurology despite the fact he assumed this position in his last five years at the university. When a white assistant professor was appointed to a full professorial position and named head of the department, Fuller retired after thirty-four years of service. Fuller had never been of the character to embrace publicity. He always believed that “his work would tell in the end.” Retirement allowed Fuller an opportunity to continue a practice in psychiatry in his home in Framingham. In his practice he treated patients regardless of color or ability to pay. Patients from Boston to Western Massachusetts sought his expertise.

At the time of Fuller’s death, the only acknowledgement of his work was an Honorary Doctor of Science Degree awarded in 1943 by his alma mater, Livingstone College. It was not until October, 1973 that a one-day tribute to Fuller was held as part of the Boston University Medical School centennial celebration. Donations were made during this occasion to cast a small bust of Fuller sculpted by his wife. In 1974, the university opened the Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature. The Center was designed to provide facilities for psychiatric outpatient services, community education and research. Decision to honor Fuller was made because of his dedication to advances in neuropsychiatry and his interest in promoting better health care for minorities and the poor. From the time of Fuller’s initial settlement in Framingham, Massachusetts in 1908 to the late 1900s, the demographics of Framingham changed drastically. Now a richly diverse community, the opening of a new middle school spurred an investigation by the town for a proper dedication of an institution of learning. On Sunday, April 4, 1995, the Fuller Middle School was dedicated, honoring the contributions of both Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller and his wife Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller whose home had stood around the corner from the school.

Fuller’s life would not permit racism to quench the resolve and commitment to a productive life in medicine and research. Fuller persevered in order to obtain the best training available to allow him to become a pioneer in neuroscience. Fuller traveled the road bringing him from immigrant status to socially accepted doctor of color at a time of segregation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Will the Real Solomon Carter Fuller Please Stand Up?**

**Who is Solomon Carter Fuller? Fill in the table below with your initial beliefs about Fuller and compare your beliefs with the realities of his life presented in the article.**

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Initial Belief</b>	<b>Reality</b>
slave		
Liberia, West Africa		
pioneer		
disease		
Coffee plantation		
freedom		
Westborough State Hospital		
medicine		

Word/Phrase	Initial Belief	Reality
sculptor		
doctor		
immigrant		
research		
Munich		
professor		
Fuller Middle School		

Which of your beliefs were proved incorrect? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What conclusions can you draw from this activity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**How Does It Relate?  
Idioms and Their Meanings**

Idioms provide an opportunity for you to evaluate daily sayings or expressions and how they impact your point of view. Select an idiom of your choice from the list below or supply one of your own and analyze how the idiom connects to the activity about beliefs verses reality.

1. A problem shared is a problem halved
2. Don't judge a book by the cover
3. Think before you speak
4. A still tongue keeps a wise head
5. Add insult to injury
6. Dot all the i's and cross all the t's
7. Each to their own
8. Eat your words
9. Exception that proves the rule
10. Draw a line in the sand

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