



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2018 Volume I: An Introduction to Income Inequality in America: Economics, History, Law

Economic Inequality: What It Is, How It Affects Our Lives, and What We Can Do About It

Guide for Curriculum Unit 18.01.07
by Eden C. Stein

This unit introduces the topic of economics and economic inequality to 8th grade students through the use of nonfiction texts, podcasts, and films, and also asks students to examine, interpret and evaluate data independently, thus acquiring one of the most important skills for critical literacy in the 21st century. The recent young adult book, *Economic Inequality: The American Dream Under Siege*, by Coral Celeste Frazer is the central text for this curriculum unit and each student will have a copy of the text to read in class. Students study about the American Dream, and economic mobility as well as how these factors have changed over the past 50 years in the United States. Most importantly, students discover exactly what economic inequality consists of, how it impacts our lives, and what can be done about it. In addition to reading text there are classroom debates and the interpretation of political cartoons. As a culminating project, each student chooses a proposed solution to economic inequality for his or her own topic for an argumentative essay. It is hoped that in addition to teaching valuable skills and content that the unit provides a more educated citizenship for the future of our society.

(Developed for English Language Arts, grade 8; recommended for English Language Arts, grade 8)

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