



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2019 Volume II: Teaching about Race and Racism Across the Disciplines

Identity and Social Justice

Curriculum Unit 19.02.06
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Introduction

“Why we always learning about Martin Luther King, slavery and jail? I swear it’s always the same thing!”

Listening to the words of a disgruntled teen, I remember asking myself the same question as a New Haven Public Schools student. In elementary school, I learned about King George’s greed versus the courage of our forefathers. America fought for independence, threw some tea in a harbor, and through non traditional war formations and guerilla combat, won independence. In middle school, I learned about the Civil War, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement. African Americans, through resilience, grit, and peaceful protest, won their freedom and equality. In high school, I learned about ancient civilizations around the world, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement; this time with more detailed documentaries of Dr. King and the SCLC.

Whether it be following the North Star to freedom, refusing to go to the back of a bus, or winning a football game, my education taught me the same narrative in everything to do with race: peace, harmony and resilience are always the answer. Our national anthem celebrates rebellion and *the blood of the patriots*, yet at the same time, our news outlets and history books preach for peaceful protest as the modality for racial equality, deeming any instance of chaos as savagery. We’re told to dismiss hundreds of years of slavery and internment, yet are told to “never forget” 9/11.

The effects go far beyond the classroom; the narratives that are told are internalized as truth, shaping the identity and orientations of who we become, and how we see the world. This design is intentional and position people of color as subordinate, furthering the white dominant culture baked into our society.

In our seminar, *Teaching Race Across Disciplines*, we engaged in informed discussion and self reflection of the extent white supremacy lives within academia, and also, tenets of *Critical Race Theory*¹, exploring what this looks like in practice. In conversations surrounding race based within public K-12 classrooms, there is typically discomfort. The immediate thought, especially within literature, is that curriculum will be *less rigorous*, with a sole focus on the struggle of marginalized populations. In this curriculum, I have two specific focuses. First, I use specific strategies and mindsets to create a classroom culture of safety and trust, allowing moments of discomfort to become learning experiences. Secondly, I will create a reinvigorated humanities curriculum that

allows students to engage in authentic conversations in identity and society, without straying away from the skills students need in engaging with traditional curriculum. We will study the conditions surrounding injustice through varied perspectives, and students will walk away with a nuanced perspective in conversation surrounding society and race.

Background:

The unit I will specifically focus on is in an elective for 11-12th graders titled *Race, Power and Americana*. Each class is an hour and 10 minutes, and we meet three times per week. This is a half-year literature elective that focuses on the concept of being an “American,” its requirements for membership, and the factors that change the ways individuals experience life within this society. It is a blend of history and literature, and an exploration of individual identity. The sequence I outline below will be the first of three units of the course.

I teach 10th-12th grade literature at New Haven Academy. We are a small magnet school of approximately 260 students. Our school demographics are reported, 66% Black, 24% Hispanic, 6% White and 3% Asian. We are affiliated with The Coalition of Essential Schools, and one of the founding schools of the organization, Facing History and Ourselves. Under both of these organizations, our school operates on their principles: depth over coverage in designing curriculum, teaching students to use their minds in contrast to harnessing content, positioning students as workers and teachers as coaches, fostering a culture of democracy and equity, and demonstrating non discriminatory practices and pedagogies. Through Facing History, our school demonstrates a commitment to social justice, ethical reflection, conscious citizenship, demonstrating upstandership in the face of oppression.

In the 9th and 10th grade literature courses, we heavily focus on the ability to communicate an argument through use of evidence in verbal, and written expression. Student craft arguments after analyzing a novel, producing argumentative essays, and using the evidence they gather to also engage in formal discussion. When students advance to the upper grades, they use these fundamental skills to engage in a specific elective. Our courses are not tracked by ability; there is no honors students, and my room consists of students with varying levels of reading and writing.

Rationale:

A specific tension I find in my classroom and others, since the very theme and framework in our school elicits conversations in race, identity, and society, at times, especially in the lower grade, tensions arise due to the subject matter. From class to class, both students and teachers operate on different definitions and understandings of race, power and identity. This has adverse effects, and definitely an area of growth in my own practice, as well as my school as a whole.

In the time of social media, more than ever, there is an urgent need for students to have platforms to express themselves, and engage in work of self-discovery, identity exploration, and learning from each other. On top of this, there is also an opportunity gap. There is a wide disparity between our district, our black and brown

students, and their white counterparts from neighboring affluent communities. We are a district heavily grounded by test scores and data, yet especially with the current move, increasing the caseload to social workers and school psychologists, there is a severe need for authentic social emotional learning and spaces where this can occur. This unit and approach builds community, allowing our students of color to explore and express themselves through shared language, while simultaneously bolstering their reading and writing skills, addressing the disparity in test scores.

Content Objectives:

Overview:

Identity is complicated, and changes depending on who you are and where you are. In our country, identity is directly tied to power and some are afforded privileges and others have disadvantages. This course will study identity as a social construct, and will go into further depth on race. Students will study the complications and nuances that go into the formation of identity and race, historical injustices and responses tied to it. We will study redlining, and a specific chapter of history, the South Bronx in the 1960's. Rap music is currently the most successful music genre, even having small ripples in the country music world. Its origins, often overlooked due to the multi-faceted nature of the music, is a culture with a rich history rooted in social justice, giving a voice to the voices that were silenced. Its origins in the South Bronx, and its usage as a platform in response to social inequity, is often overlooked. Rap is a platform used worldwide to express a specific message. However, its role in academia, and in music in general, is often polarizing. We will do a specific study in rap as a form of response to systemic racism. By interacting with this curriculum, students engage in ethical reflection, in a safe space, finding a platform for their voice, learning content that's relevant to current day. They will engage in informed conversations about race and equity, producing creative and analytical writing, while significantly improving their analytical reading and writing skills

Essential Questions:

What is an American and what is the criteria for membership?

In society, what is our obligation to each other?

What are the social identities that make up an individual, and to what extent can they change?

What are the different types of racism, and what is the importance of understanding the working definitions?

What is the purpose and functions of music, and what can we learn from analyzing it?

What is the connection between Hip Hop and Activism?

Enduring Understandings:

The American label is tied to whiteness, and the criteria shifts based on whomever it benefits. In a society, we each have an obligation to each other, yet our agency shifts pending on proximity. Ultimately, a society that does not look out for the strangers around us crumbles. There are many identities that make up who we are, however, these categories change/ disappear depending on where you are. Racism is an ideology and set of

practices, beliefs, that support the structure of a racial hierarchy, producing and reproducing system of advantage and disadvantage.² The most popular definition racism is the mere treatment of another individual based on their skin color. Operating of such a simplistic definition of race dismisses the impact of racial hierarchy, and produces colorblind ideology. Music is used by many for its soothing aesthetics, however, it can be used as a document unlocking knowledge of history, a platform for activism and unity, and also, a way to express perspective. Hip Hop, specifically, was born in the South Bronx as a response to injustice, giving a voice to the marginalized population. It was, and still is, a platform used to illuminate injustice and give platform and agency to activism.³

Teaching Strategies

I will go over the scope and sequence of the two major parts to this curriculum unit: Identity and Our story, and Hip Hop and Social Justice. After the specific experiences I name, I will write notes commenting on key factors in facilitation, and also make connections to the learnings from seminar to best implement these activities in your own classroom practice. At the conclusion of both parts, I will also make a summative connection to my learnings in seminar.

Part 1: Identity and Our Story (2-3 Weeks)

Overview:

The main learning of this part will center on the different aspects of students' social identities. This will be the very first unit in the Fall, after the first few days where schedules, classroom changes and everything else falls into place. Doing this sets the foundations for the rest of the year. Students will reflect on each of their individual identities, sharing stories of each, and analyze how each of these plays a factor a students' lived experience. They will learn about each other and the different perspectives we bring to the table. Engaging in this will build the foundations of how we operate in the classroom, building a safe and comfortable space for sharing,⁴ ground the class in shared language and practices, and also centering human experience at the forefront.

Learning Experiences

Each process is an experience students will engage in, the recommended time frame, and also brief summaries of each.

1. Opening: Read/ Analyze, The Complexities of Identity by Beverly Daniel Tatum. (2 Day)

In her essay, Tatum approaches identity through explaining the through two major sections titled, "Who Am I? Multiple Identities." and "Domination and Subordination." She speaks of the idea that our identity is broken up into multiple parts, the systemic advantages that exist, and also the then discusses ways in which specific identities are oppressed and which hold power.⁵ In reading and analyzing and debriefing this, students will

gain language around their individual identities, and also the concept of domination and subordination in this country.

Note: The most important aspect of this reading is the major concept of the individual being comprised of into different parts, and also, introducing the idea of individuals inherently having advantage or disadvantage within this country. In a step towards transforming the dominant narrative, which tells a specific one-dimensional story⁶ on specific social identities, it's essential for individuals to reflect on who they are and this reading will give them access to communicating this.

2. Reading/ Discussing, The People in Me, by Robin Kelley (2-3 Days)

This essay is a reflection on Mr. Kelley's experience growing up black, but having his membership questioned due to various factors. In reading this, students will understand an even deeper nuance of identity, and understand to what extent each individualized one influences the next. In reading this, they will be asked to make explicit connections to the previous text in engaging in discussion.

Note: The star of this reading is to move students understanding as dimensions of identity in complete isolation, in contrast to influencing / working off of each other. It also provides language for the depth that each piece of identity holds.

3. Where I'm From Poem (2-3 Days)

After reading and reflecting on the essays that touch on the complexities of race and identity, students will write a creative reflective piece in reflection of their own. Students will use the framework of George Ella Lyon's, *Where I'm From* poem, but with experiences closely related to their selected social identities, and the experiences that they associate with them. First, students will read and annotate the poem for understanding of structure. Then in creation, set the following parameters:

Requirements:

- **Must be 10-14 lines**
- **Intentional usage of imagery and metaphor**
- **Centering around 1-3 social identities.**

Line Guidance:

- **A significant object that tells a story.**
- **Pieces of an important conversation**
- **Important quotes, lyrics, or anything else.**
- **A significant place.**
- **A vivid description of a significant place.**
- **Any other specific descriptions of memories that bring you pride, confusion, joy, sadness and an array of emotion.**

Each of these can be more than one line. Be creative, rearrange in a way that makes sense.

Note: After writing, students can share in small group debriefs, different from the ones before. Invite students to also share whole group. Be intentional in how you group students, put students together who know each other the

least, and be unapologetic about this being your intent. The importance of this poem is the reference points students choose. This poem is a more rigorous and personal adlib, and a subtle yet intentional structure for deep reflection. In satisfying the academic and writing component, this is a rigorous exercise in the usage of poetic devices. Again, just like the identity chart, it's important to include your own example, modeling vulnerability and breaking away from the dominant / authoritative structure of the teacher.⁸

4. The Story Exchange (1-3 Days)

This is the final activity of this unit. Students have spent much of their time self reflecting, sharing and listening to the lived experiences of others, and now this activity makes active listening, empathy and storytelling at the forefront. This activity is inspired by *Narrative 4*, an organization that creates platform for story exchanges globally and nationally. The major parts are broken into three phases: writing and drafting, sharing and listening in partners and finally, presenting. The following is an outline for each:

Writing/ Drafting

Students will create a structured story with a beginning middle and end centering on one of the following prompts:

- A day that changed everything.
- A difficult decision.
- The day I experienced discrimination.
- A time I was resilient.
- A time I experienced raw emotion.
- A day I witnessed or experienced courage.
- A time I experienced kindness/ friendship
- A time I experienced failure.
- A time I experienced genuine happiness.

Sharing/ Listening

Students will each individually pick a prompt to answer to, and prepare a story with a beginning, middle and end. They will break off into partners, and engage in an active listening protocol. They will listen to their partner's story, ask clarifying questions, and anything else. Ultimately, they will come back into the larger group, and tell the story as if they are their partner.

Presenting

- Each student will sit in a circle next to their partner.
- Each student will have a copy of their partners identity chart taped to themselves.
- Each student will tell the story as though they are their partner.

Note: Again, it's essential to model vulnerability. Be ready to either engage in a story exchange with another student, or pre-record/ ask a teacher on a free period, and or guest, to exchange with you. In facilitation, depending on numbers and timing, it may be worth splitting this into two different classes. Some stories will be silly, and some students will open up immediately, both are OK, its essential to ground the class in norms for sharing and responding to each other.

Summative Connection to Seminar:

A major theme and recurring conversation in our group were the tangible ways to counter colorblind ideology, colonialism and dominant narratives. In order to unlock consciousness within students, and setting parameters to engage in this curriculum, it is an absolute necessity to decolonize the classroom space, and the dominant structure of teacher as authoritative figure in contrast to co-learner. The process and product of this part of the curriculum is grounded in the tenets of Critical Race Theory, including: becoming more comfortable with the process of not knowing, problematizing our thinking in times we think we know what students need to do/ think, positioning ourselves as co-learners, searching for ways to invite traditionally silenced voices into the classroom.⁹ Giving students access to language around identity, and turning reflective practice into the focal point of the class, their lived experiences become a product of learning. Also, according to research, when creating inclusive spaces, research shows four major factors include child-centered teaching, cultivating diversity, classroom relationships, and caring environments.¹⁰ True learning will not happen unless our students develop skills in listening and learning from each other. After engaging in this opening, students will have had many interactions and opportunities to learn from each other, making true collaboration moving forward the norm.

Part 2: Response to Injustice

Overview:

We will study responses to injustice, specifically, the history of redlining and also the origins of rap as a response to social injustice. They will also explore the ways music has and can serve as a modality for human connection.¹¹ Students will engage in discourse about race, society, and the specific perspectives of the artists. Ultimately, through the modality of verbal, visual and written expression, students will illuminate an issue they see within their own society, and craft a form of response.

Learning Experiences:

1. Opening: Reading/Analyzing The Structure of Racism in Color-Blind Post Racial America, by Eduardo Bonilla Silva. (4 days)

Students will analyze this reading to understand different definitions of racism, colorblind ideology, and what this looks like in modern day. The biggest struggle in conversations on race and racism in the classroom is the lack of language and terminology we operate with. Having language in the different types of racism gives students access to having more nuanced and complex conversations. In opening, students will reflect and engage with each other on the following written reflection:

Warm Up: What is racism? Where have you either witnessed, or experienced racism?

This is where the opening unit in learning about each other pays off, as students are more inclined and comfortable to express their understandings, misunderstandings, and engage in discourse. After this warm up, students will read an excerpt from Bonilla-Silva's essay with the following guided questions:

- What are the different kinds of racism?
- Where have you either experienced, learned about, or witnessed each of the different types?

The last activity will be a formative assessment, revisiting the beginning. I will pose the question, "Taking today's text and conversations into consideration, what is racism? To what extent did your understanding of it change?" By engaging in the opening, the reading, and returning back to the original question, I am trying to move the students' individualistic understanding of racism to one influenced by social structures and forces. There will be two days worth of reading, finding specific lines for comprehension, and then a day of full discussion.

2. Reading/ Analyzing excerpts from, The Case for Reparations (2 days)

Opening: Video Response: Vice: The Case for Reparations Goes to Congress.

- What are your thoughts and reactions?
- What connections can you make to Bonilla Silva's reading?

Reading/ Analyzing Excerpts: Redlining, Clyde Ross and The Contract Buyers League

In this essay, Coates illuminates the practice of redlining while simultaneously telling the lived experience of activist Clyde Ross. Ross' push was for fair housing practices.¹² In this essay, and the mini-documentary embedded in it, it is a concrete example of systemic racism and unlocks understanding of the formation of modern day segregation and oppressive practices. In watching the mini documentary, the primary questions will be: What is the relationship between race and housing? What emotions do you think Ross experiences, and what is the reasoning behind each?

Exploring Interactive Maps of New Haven

Using the interactive map, students can explore documents of their specific neighborhoods in New Haven, the historical documents labeling each section, and unpack the language used to describe each area. I've done this activity in the past, in a previous unit and its a multi-functional resource, to no surprise, students feel a deep connection seeing history directly connected to themselves.

Note: In implementation, be sure to allow platforms for students to speak and write their truth. It's especially important to encourage students to feel and express emotion. The nature of the subject matter, especially for students who currently live in low-income housing, is intensely relevant and current. Having language to a specific feeling is deeply impactful in many ways. In connection to Critical Race Theory, this is the time where it's

the most visible. The teaching of this specific history, and it's visible effects on marginalized communities, blatantly questions the notion of the law as neutral, and illuminates racism contributing to societal advantage and disadvantage.¹³ Using this as a case study illuminates racism as a systemic issue, further supporting the ideas in Bonilla Silva's essay.

3. Reading from small from Music and The Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1968: A Classroom Approach and Analyzing “We Are the Children.” (3 days)

Students will read, annotate and discuss this reading in order to study music as a response to social injustice, as well as music being key historical artifacts revealing not only the sentiment and emotion of the artist, but also, the conditions of society during that time period. They will engage in the following questions:

- What is the relationship between music and history?
- What is the relationship between music and activism?
- What are the connections between this reading, and Bonilla Silva’s?
- After this, students will then listen to, and analyze “ We Are The Children,” by Chris Kando Lijima, Joanne Nobuko, and Miyamoto “Charlie” Chin. They will listen and engage in discussion /analysis of the following:
- What does this song reveal about the artists and their lived experience?
- What does this song reveal about the time period?
- What are your thoughts and reactions and connections?

After discussion, I will present a powerpoint of the significance of this song, and its ties to Asian-American Civil Rights, and Anti-War Movements in the late 60’s and early 70’s.¹⁴ Without having any knowledge of this time period, through the emotion, lyrics and rhythm of the song, they will be able to understand many of the artists’ struggles and responses to conditions of this time period.

Note: The most important understanding from this lesson is understanding is recognition of as modality for expression, organization, and key artifact unlocking knowledge of history. Many students, and educators, especially in literature, choose to analyze songs for their surface level value in contrast to unpacking everything. The powerful takeaway is being able to unpack so much within just a 3 minute song.

4. Response to Social Injustice: The Birth of Hip Hop. (3 Days)

In the opening, students will engage in a gallery walk of images of the South Bronx in the late 60’s and early 70’s using the strategy, *Big Paper*, in combination of a gallery walk. Each picture will be intentionally curated to elicit a full spectrum of emotion and storytelling in this specific period of turmoil.

Viewing: Hip Hop Evolution/ Discussion

After debriefing, students will view a 20 minute segment of the Netflix documentary, *Hip Hop Evolution*, which gives context to the specific pictures, and also, makes direct connections to the birth of Hip Hop. This documentary is an incredibly engaging piece of visual storytelling, as told through historians and also the pioneers of rap. It also breaks into the segment informing us of the historical impact of GrandMaster Flash and the

Furious Five’s , *The Message*, the song raising awareness in the conditions of the Bronx in the early 70’s. We will pause the documentary for students to do a stop and jot, reflecting on connections of the video, and the readings from yesterday. I will specifically push students to reflect on the structures of racism, and also the role of music in this era.

Analyzing the lyrics / music video of *The Message*:

After learning the brief history of this song, and the time period, students will engage in the same analysis as yesterday’s song:

- What does this song reveal about the artists and their lived experience?
- What is the artists' perspective on , and response to, racism?
- What lines give you the strongest reactions, and or connection?

Note: The Message is loaded with historical context, significance, and is easily one of the most important songs in history. With the students' new lense of reading music as a modality of expression, and a historical document, the connections and reactions will be rich. The other added bonus in using this song, the beat as well as the song itself is very popular. At the same time almost nobody, even adults, have engaged in listening to the meaning of the song. On top of the historical significance, this song also provides a framework in moving forward in unpacking "the message," of each artist.

5. An Analysis of Good Kid, Maad City, Kendrick Lamar. (2 Days)

This entire album is an autobiography of the adolescence of Kendrick Lamar. The two specific songs that make up the album title, and also thematic of the nature of history are "Good kid" and "Maad City." The former is a reflection of growing up navigating around an environment riddled with violence, police brutality, and dire conditions. The second part centers around the duality of Kendrick's decision in his affiliations with gangs; not joining mans no protection, but joining leads to a path of destruction.¹⁵ In each of these songs, students will discuss the following:

- What does this song reveal about Kendrick's lived experience?
- Where do you see injustice?
- What is his response to it?

6. Reflection/ The Oracle Poem (1 Day)

Students will take this day to process their best notes, and engage in honest discussion in connection with each other. The oracle poem is a process in which student blindly answer questions in relation to the path to liberation.¹⁶ We will form a circle, and one student will start with writing a question. The next will write a response, not knowing the answer to the question. The object of this process is to gain connectivity in seeing how many have answers to questions students didn't even know the questions to, and also, a way to bring everyone close. This day will also be dedicated to organic discussion reflecting on key ideas, concepts and the complexity of emotion and new understandings students feel.

7. Rap/ Video Analysis/ Discussion (2-3 Days)

This in the process in which students will use all their knowledge, shared language, understanding of systemic racism, rap music and its relation with activism. With this, they will engage in discussion and analysis, with an added component of visuals. In small groups, of no more than four, students will work together breaking down the lyrics, music videos, and message of three different artists from different backgrounds, each with different social identities, all expressing their message. The artists/ songs are the following:

Ruby Ibarra: Featuring Rocky Rivera, Klassy and Faith Santilla: *Us*.

Kendrick Lamar: *Alright*.

Prolific Rapper & A Tribe Called Red: *Black Snakes*.

Each small group will engage in a sustained discussion, going through each music video and set of lyrics one by one, and after, on their chromebook and a page for each artist they must:

1. Screenshot + annotate 3 images from the video that elicit 3 different emotions. Explain why you picked each specific image
2. What is each of the artists' responses to racism/ injustice, and what lyrics best demonstrate this?
3. What connections can you make to these lyrics? What connections do these songs and artists have with each other?

After finished with all three, we will go whole group and debrief our findings with each other. We will ground discussion around the following:

- What are the patterns in each song?
- What is a new learning, or understanding that you or your group came to?
- What are any specific words of appreciation, connection, you have for any of the artist?

Note: Each of these songs express a very specific story and express a wide variety and

range of emotion in each. I am intentionally countering the dominant narrative of poets of color being hollow and one dimensional, disrupting students' orientation and colonial narrative they hold on indigenous people, Asian Americans, as well as the quest for equity.

8. Workshop Days: Essay/ Graded Discussion (6 days)

The following is the prompt to the essay students will prepare for: In Eduardo Bonilla Silva's, *The Structure of Racism in Color Blind "Post Racial" America*, he outlines the different types of racism and how they manifest. In rapper, Joyner Lucas' polarizing song and video, *I'm Not Racist*, he raps through the perspective of a white and black male holding a discussion on racism. Using both texts, craft a structured argumentative essay on the following questions:

- Which definition of racism does each of Lucas' characters operate from? Evaluate each character's response to injustice.

In preparation for this, they will read, annotate and explore the music video as well as the lyrics. In the gathering of evidence of the essay, they will also use this to participate in a formal discussion on the following:

- What emotions does this song/ video elicit?
- Is this an informed conversation in race/ racism?
- What, readings, information or general experiences would you recommend to both individuals from our class/ in general?

Note: The discussion is meant to capture any thoughts, reactions, or new understandings that the formal essay doesn't lend itself a platform for. This song went viral in 2017 and was discussed on many mainstream news outlets, and on social media personalities. The video depicts a white man wearing a MAGA hat and a black man, but both voices are actually Joyner Lucas. They represent emotionally charged responses in conversation about racism, and the two go into a sudden embrace at the end. The content of this song connects to every reading and activity we've done thus far, but only scratches the surface of what we've discussed together. In having a discussion about a discussion of race, they are in the level of analysis and synthesis, and inherently will need language in order to engage with each other.

Summative Connection to Seminar:

The scope and sequence of a traditional literature curriculum is grounded in works by white authors, and then

works from authors of color in isolation, positioned as opposition to “traditional studies.” In the 1960’s, and even to this day, scholars in literature fight for the preservation of “American Literature,” and consequently, black and brown students around the country are stuck reading literature from a colonial perspective, and even worse, the interaction with these texts are deemed as the highest standard of intellect.¹⁷ The curriculum I’m offering is not an alternative to white literature, nor is it a justification of why rap should be poetry. It is not a story leading to a positively framed story of an aggrieved population’s inspirational path to hope and perseverance. Using texts from the art form in rap, now the most popular and influential genre worldwide, my students will have tools to analyze a society that was never built for them, through a curriculum that was.

Classroom Activities:

Daily/ Weekly Practices:

- *Journaling*: Students will keep a journal with guiding prompts to track their learning, a space to unpack their thoughts, and also ground themselves. Students will use this as the platform for free writes, and space to put their thoughts.
- *Open Mic*: Students will be invited to share pieces of writing/ reflections. Much of the content elicits reactions, having this as a platform allows students to become creative.
- *Content Quizzes*: These will happen in an online platform, quick and simple multiple choice questions to harness the language and major terminology of class.
- *Reflect/ Move Forward*: Students will engage in monthly stepbacks, evaluating their own performance in accordance with their grades/ feedback and create plans moving forward. This is a way for students to self regulate and check their progress.
- *Cloze Reads*: Students will highlight essential lines from the text, and annotate their thoughts, reactions, and commentary grounded in the guiding questions. The collection of the specific lines from texts will be crucial for their writing. Students will need to do this in order to unpack the dense nature of many of the readings.
- *Video Responses*: Students will frequently watch videos in connection with the subject matter of class. This includes cyphers, with students recording specific lines that stand out, excerpts from documentaries connected to history, or other visuals that counter dominant narrative.
- *Practice Paragraphs*: Students will engage in formal analysis by writing paragraphs grounded in the passages and readings. In order to have a running record of writing, its essential to grade writing pieces prior to the major essay.
- *Graded/ Recorded Discussions*: Students will engage in graded discussions to a content aligned question. They will be allowed to bring their annotations to discussion. Using a tripod, these discussions will be recorded, and students will re-watch their discussion in order to assess their content knowledge, verbal communication, and also any other observations in their pattern/ tendency.
- *Rubric Analysis/ Grading*: Students will break down the rubrics, and grade sample work to gain a deeper

understanding of how they're being assessed.

- *Active Listening Protocol*: Students will engage in formal protocol, timing their active listening and requiring direct response to each other.
- *Peer Editing*: Students will comment, question, and evaluate each other's work.
- *SAT Practice*: Students will engage with, and create SAT style questions that have the content.
- *Turn and Talks*: Students will frequently share in partners, small groups, and whole class. This allows students to verbally process the subject matter.
- *Stop and Jot*: Students will be told to actively write their thoughts in the moment in order to ground their thinking.
- *The Three Most Important Lines*: Students will frequently review their notes, and previous readings, and synthesize them down to what they deem to be the most important.
- *Picture Analysis*: Students will break down imagery, specifically for the mood that is elicited, and also, thoughts/ reactions.

Note: These are all the frequent rhythms that will help students internalize the content.

Extended Learning:

Field Trips:

- Yale Art Gallery.
- The Universal Hip Hop Museum (open 2023)
- Museum of the City of New York.

Guests:

- Local rappers.
- Local slam poets/ clubs.
- Local activists/ organizations

Activities:

- Collaboration with music teacher/ performance artists.
- Poetry Slams.
- Schoolwide performances.
- Open mic during lunch/ after school.
- Slam poetry/ rap club district wide.

Resources

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Appendix

Curriculum aligned with all reading and writing district standards.

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