



Yale-New Haven  
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2021 Volume I: The Social Struggles of Contemporary Black Art

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## The Curator as Social Change Agent

Guide for Curriculum Unit 21.01.07  
by Cathy Ramin

This unit is about the role of the curator in the art world and their power to confer value within a culture. The intended audience for this unit is a high school entry level art class entitled Exploring Visual Design taken by all high school grade levels. The goal of the unit will ultimately be to address Anchor Standard 6 in the National Core Art Standards by asking students to curate their own art exhibit that communicates a message and conveys meaning to their intended audience. Students will be asked to consider what role artists, galleries and curators can play in creating a dialogue to promote social change. Along the way, students will also explore themes of identity, community and representation as they prepare for their role as curator.

This unit is designed as a Project Based Learning unit rooted in inquiry and student guided research. Through the study of African American artists and curators from the 1960's to the present day, students will understand that representation has been a hard-fought battle for artists of color. Over the course of 4 weeks, students will take a field trip to the Yale Art Gallery, speak with working curators and curate a show around a theme that they think will connect to their chosen audience.

(Developed for Exploring Visual Design, grades 9-12; recommended for Photography 1-2 and Mixed Media, grades 9-12)

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