



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1994 Volume IV: Racism and Nativism in American Political Culture

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## Changing Attitudes in America

Curriculum Unit 94.04.04  
by Carolyn Kinder

In spite of the progress that has been made in the United States since the Civil Rights Movement toward achieving racial justice, racism remains the single most destructive force in American society. Social problems such as poverty, unemployment, urban decay, deteriorating educational opportunities, crime and violence are all elevated by the persistence of racism in our society.

To reduce all forms of discrimination including racism, it is important that we keep moving forward with the necessary legal reforms. But past history reveals that we cannot legislate an end to racism. People must address racism in personal relationships and in their daily lives. Racism must be challenged in our workplace, schools, the media, and in every institution of our society.

The purpose of this unit on CHANGING ATTITUDES IN AMERICA is to facilitate and foster greater interracial understanding, friendship and cooperation. It will include proactive projects and activities to reduce racism and build a community of citizenry.

This unit designed for grades 5-6 allow students to discuss strategies for confronting destructive stereotypes and mythologies, as well as promoting racial understanding in children. The students will look at problems of African Americans stemming from racism. *Brown v. Topeka, Kansas Board of Education*, immigration and racial diversity put emphasis on America as a family working on common ground as a nation of diverse peoples. The unit's vision is to help students understand their important roles in this society of immigrants, "the great experiment."

The unit has content with specific objectives that give students skills to do critical thinking and problem solving, as well as vocabulary, a survey, lesson plans, a resource list that include field trips, speakers, reading materials and a bibliography.

It is hoped that teachers and other educators might find this unit helpful in promoting cultural diversity among our youths and other adults. Let us begin our journey in discussing "CHANGING ATTITUDES IN AMERICA."

## Racism

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Racism is the theory or idea that there is a link between inherited physical traits and certain traits of personality, intellect, or culture combined with the notion that some races are inherently superior to others.<sup>1</sup>

The theory of racism is a helpful rationalization for conquest and expansion. When the Spaniards first came to America, writers supplied them with the excuses for taking the land away from the Indians and for treating them with a complete lack of consideration. They developed the theory that Indians had an entirely different origin from that of the Spaniards. They were not human in the same sense and, therefore, there was no need to accord them the same treatment as fellow human beings. The familiar refrain of the “white man’s burden,” which was mainly manufactured and found its literary expression in the writings of Thomas Carlyle, James A. Foude, Charles Kingsley and most strongly and clearly, in those of Rudyard Kipling, made imperialism a noble activity destined to bring civilization to the benighted member of other races. The French justified the maintenance of their colonial empire on the basis of their mission: to bring civilization to the backward peoples of the world. <sup>1</sup>

In all of these colonizing empires, there were undoubtedly many individuals honestly convinced of the nobility of their motives and their enterprise. At the same time, the feelings of racial superiority that accompanied colonialism played an important part in developing resentments among the colonized which even emancipation and independence have not always made it possible to overcome. However, the recognition that treatment of ethnic minorities may have important implications for international relations has focused attention upon the need to improve intergroup relations in general. In the United States the movement to provide greater equality of opportunity for all ethnic groups was progressive. The first dramatic expression of this tendency was furnished by the unanimous decision of the U.S. Supreme Court on May 17, 1954. The court decision, based in part on social-science research, stated that enforced segregation of black school children in certain states and localities was contrary to the principles of the U.S. Constitution. <sup>2</sup>

## Scientific Racism

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In scientific racism intent may also be invisible and its existence difficult to prove. Any false scientific view of race that equates racial differences with racial superiority or inferiority may be defined as scientific racism. The authority of science as a discipline of study has long been called into such debatable areas as the relative importance of heredity versus environment. Whether institutional or scientific, racism has deep roots in European and American pasts.

Winthrop D. Jordan in an important 1968 study (*White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*) provided conclusive evidence that American racism is traces to the prejudices of Elizabethan Englishmen. Their attitudes toward blacks were shaped by their own needs for national self-consciousness and identity. With great mastery of details, the author points out that racism preceded rather than originated with slavery, and that it persisted as a psychological as well as an economic system of exploitation. In effect, the author’s central theme is that the idea of white supremacy over blacks served to provide a sense of social purpose and control for whites.

The principle reason for the persistence of antiblack racism and concomitant policies of segregation and

discrimination is historical. They are too elemental and vigorous a part of the national heritage to die of their own accord. American society has always been structured along white supremacy lines, and Americans absorb the racial values of their society just as they do its economics, politics, and other values.

Here are the practical consequences of antiblack racism and a major reason for its endurance. Segregation creates a vicious cycle, a self-fulfilling prophecy. Its consequences become its justification. White Americans think of their national experience as a success story. To them, America is a land of hope and opportunity, of economic abundance, of social mobility, and of political equality. They see their society as one that cultivates initiative, individualism, self-reliance, and self-sacrifice. They see America as a nation whose institutions are benevolent: the law protects everyone from oppression and is not itself oppressive. The fundamental rights of citizens are spelled out in the U.S. Constitution and guaranteed to all. The right of trial by an impartial jury of one's peers is so basic as to be common place. Every man respects his fellowman, his freedom of expression and movement. This picture, of course, is overdrawn in the popular imagination, but there is an element of truth in it for whites.

For blacks the story is different because ideals are honored more in the breach than in the observation. Furthermore, for many whites, white supremacy has been of their center ideals. From 1890 to the mid-1960's blacks were legally relegated to a world of more or less rigid segregation and a deadening second class status that saps the energies of all but the most persevering. The racial meaning of this must be understood, for the conditions thus produced have persisted. Segregation is the most important fact in the history of African-Americans in the twentieth century dominating their experience as political freedom, economic opportunity, and social mobility dominated the white man. Segregation excluded African-Americans from a normal way of life. It tended to cultivate in them personal and social traits and moral and ethical values which adds up to a way of life notably different from that of whites. Not all African-American were so affected, but a significant amount were. However the compliance was carried out by institutions that subscribed to the notion of African Americans as second class citizens.

Measured by the standards of the larger society, the "good" African-American was one who was humble, ingratiating, and childlike. The African-American's experience did not reward thrift and self-sacrifice as the white man's did. It offered him little hope for a better tomorrow. It encouraged irresponsibility, ignorance, servility, helplessness, and hopelessness- qualities that White Americans despised. His political and social status was ill-designed to inculcate respect for law and government, property rights, middle class morality, family, and even his fellow African-Americans. To the African-American, government often seemed little more than an organized tyranny; law, a device for denying him the fruits of his labor; and society, a system permitting women to be compromised, children to be exploited, and honor and self respect to be undermined. Yet, even though they were subjected to tyrannical laws, many African Americans developed work ethics and moral standards that equaled or exceeded those of most whites.

Again, the racial significance of this must be stressed. For most whites, segregation was not an inconvenience and for many it was a great boon; for African-Americans it made race the supreme fact of life. At every turn it subjected the African-American to an invidious racial veil, circumscribed his liberties, stifled his talents, and thwarted his ambition. He found it impossible, or virtually so, to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship or reap the rewards of the good life. He could not readily achieve a position of self-respect, or of independence, or of virtue.

What this means is that segregation creates some ostensibly objective evidence to collaborate the segregationist view of African-Americans. That at least is the conclusion white Americans have reached.

Whites everywhere are perceived as superior to African-Americans. They are better educated, live better, and control the instruments of power and prestige. African-Americans often seem to deviate from acceptable standards of conduct. They become, in the view of whites, a race prone to violence, illegitimacy, venereal disease, broken homes, a people who threaten property value, make low scores on intelligence tests, and lower standards in public schools.

The impact of this legacy of white injustice has been overwhelming. White Americans are preconditioned to think of African-Americans in racial terms, and they accordingly conclude that the African-American's condition is explainable only in those terms. White attitudes toward African-Americans have always reflected as well as reinforced the status of the race in this country, varying from time to time and section to section according to the status or condition of African-Americans in a given time or section.

The history of antiblack thought in America seems to follow this pattern. African-Americans achieve or are relegated to a certain status for economic, political, or psychological motives. Whites develop a systematic rationale to justify this status. Only after African-Americans were enslaved did white Americans conclude that slavery was the natural status of the race. And, only after the slave system came under systematic abolitionist attack were the most elaborate scientific, historical, and scriptural authorities cultivated to legitimize it. When African-Americans were segregated, the process occurred again. Racists then recognized segregation as the natural status for African-Americans and again cultivated authorities to support their conclusion.

The slow liberalization of racial ideas over the last generation has followed closely upon the rise of an African-American middle class, the emergence of independent black Africa, and new or heightened black awareness. The difficulty is that white attitudes are changing more slowly than black achievement and the aspiration that achievement inspires. If this analysis is correct, whites will not believe essentially in racial equality until blacks actually achieve equality. Only then will the fallacies of racist thought be apparent. But the major obstacle to equality is the white man's belief in inequality and the complexities of racial policies that rest upon that belief. The way out this impasse would seem to involve social changes fundamental enough to enable Blacks to achieve actual equality. This, would require Whites to devise social policies that run counter to deeply held racial convictions and economic, social, and political arrangements designed in their interests. That they will do so, with or without further violence, is problematical. The traditions of racism are strong and enduring.

## **Institutional Racism**

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Institutional racism is a term which describes practices in the United States nearly as old as the nation itself. The term, however, appears to be of recent coinage, possibly first used by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton in their widely read book, *Black Power*.<sup>3</sup>

Institutions have great power to reward and penalize. They reward by providing career opportunities for some people and foreclosing them for others. They reward as well by the way social goods and services are distributed-by deciding who receives training and a skills, medical care, formal education, political influence, moral support, productive employment, fair treatment by the law, decent housing, and the promise of a secure future for self and children, which can lead to self respect and self confidence. No society will distribute social benefits in a perfectly equitable way. But no society need use race as a criterion to determine who will be rewarded and who punished. Any nation that permits race to affect the distribution of benefits from social policies is racist.

With desegregation in the armed forces and the passage of various civil rights bills in the 1960's, institutional racism no longer has the status of law. It is perpetuated nonetheless, sometimes by frightened and bigoted individuals, sometimes by good citizens merely carrying on business as usual, and sometimes by well-intentioned but naive reformers. An attack on institutional racism is clearly the task for Americans, who hope to obtain for their children a society less tense. To detect institutional racism, especially when it is unintentional or when it is disguised, is a very different task. And even when institutional racism is detected, it is seldom clear who is at fault. How can we say who is responsible for residential segregation, for poor education in schools, for extraordinarily high unemployment among black men, for racial stereotypes in history textbooks, for the concentration of political power in white society? Institutional racism may not necessarily involve intent because it may be submerged in the history, structure, and function of the institution. The fact that there are, for example, institutionalized white suburbs and black ghettos does not necessarily mean that dwellers in either are racists. It is to be sure, conceivable and highly probable that an ample share of racists live in both. Most dwellers would have no intent or knowledge of their being so, and would resent being called racists. Yet institutionalized racism exists and has existed in the structure and function of residential housing in the United States.

Affluent directors of an insurance companies who live in the suburbs would be likely to frown on the ghetto as a poor business risk. But, they may have no intent to practice any kind of racism. The fact that the economics of racial discrimination has prevailed and does prevail in the ghetto may be viewed as an institutionalized way of life. Thus, it may be defined as institutional racism.

It seems that too much time is spent on the separateness of our people, which leads to tension and misunderstandings. The Supreme Court landmark decision in 1954, *Brown v. Topeka, Kansas Board of Education* -which examined the impact of the desegregation of America's public schools-forces us forty years later to look at how Brown benefited blacks in modern times. Brown of course was suppose to strike down the legal structure of American apartheid and its effects. Although it was an education case, its implications go well beyond education. It was the case that broke the back of American apartheid. <sup>4</sup>

From the first Supreme Court school desegregation decision in 1954 to President Johnson's War on Poverty, the federal government has compiled a record of civil rights action with an impressive appearance. The use of federal troops in Little Rock and the forcible desegregation of southern schools in several other areas convinced many Americans that the government was ready to put force behind its pronounced policies. In 1964, President Johnson committed the nation to an "unconditional War of Poverty" to conquer it. <sup>5</sup>

In the private sector of American life, business, labor, religious organizations, and other national institutions have echoed in their statements the government's concern to eliminate segregation and discrimination. Virtually all openly racist clauses have been removed from union charters and real estate contracts. The large industries have committed themselves to equal opportunity hiring practices and in some cases to job training programs for the unemployed.

With all the legislation and policy changes of the past years the country appears to have made major progress toward solving the racial problem. But appearances are deceptive; behind the highly publicized victories for racial justice there exists a vast reservoir of ineffectiveness.

The impact of the series of civil rights laws has been greatly reduced from what it could have been because many of the individuals and institutions affected by the laws have refused to comply. There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate change on the part of local centers of power is aided and abetted by a corresponding

reluctance within the federal government to enforce its own laws.

Examples of paper decrees are numerous in every area associated with human and civil rights-in justice, welfare, law enforcement, and employment, to name a few. A good example of non compliance can be found in the campaign for integrated schools, the issue that first brought civil rights to national attention.

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that separate facilities were inherently unequal and that segregated schools would no longer be legal. Another generation of children passed through the schools before Congress finally admitted that nothing was being done and passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act. According to the 1964 Act, a school district that did not desegregate was subject to the penalty of loss of all federal funds. <sup>6</sup>

*The Brown Case* is still relevant in the sense that school boards or governmental agents cannot intentionally segregate African American students in public education. We've moved well beyond *Brown* in some respects as the practices that deprive black students or any student of equal education and opportunities have become much more subtle and much more complex. <sup>7</sup>

Our experience in this country has been that most segregation, whether it is in schools or residential areas, is not the choice of black people. It is something that is imposed upon us by others. If one looks at black communities across the country, one will basically find the same thing: black people disproportionately poor, living in inferior housing, segregated schools and segregated communities. There are some exceptions, but all of this is not the result of circumstance. It is the consequence of years or more of social engineering on the part of white people in government, in collusion with those in the private sector, that has created the pattern that we see today.

An example of this is public housing. Public housing was required to be segregated by the federal government when it first got into the business of building public housing in the 1930's. That continued well into the 1950's.

Many states enforced restrictive covenants up until 1948 when the Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional. Restrictive covenants are agreements that run with the deeds when somebody buys a piece of property that you're not going to sell that piece of property to someone of African American or Jewish descent. Those restrictive covenants contributed to how communities developed.

After World War II, the whole suburbanization process took place. The suburbanization process was underwritten very heavily by the federal government which insured most Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgages at the time. The FHA had a policy that did not allow the federal government to underwrite mortgages or insure mortgages in heterogeneous areas. So in a word, it underwrote segregated suburbanization in the United States.

Discrimination and segregation practices that occurred 50 years ago and, in many instances, have either never been adequately addressed or have snowballed. This continues to produce problems today: blacks in poor communities in our country have been locked out of educational opportunities, locked out of upward mobility, consigned to inferior housing and inferior job choices. The result is one that creates an economy that allows minimal and/or negative kinds of opportunities. For urban areas that economy has been a drug economy.

Desegregation is a desirable goal because public school education should be a process of preparing young people to live in a multiracial society. And when African American students are isolated in public schools, they are isolated from opportunity. School desegregation, in some senses, makes it more likely that African

American students will not be given a different and more inferior education than white students are receiving.

The Supreme Court in 1973 said two things, both of which are very important and unrealized by most people. First is that education is not a fundamental right. Therefore, education does not receive the highest degree of Constitutional protection. Secondly, wealth or class is not a suspect classification. That means that it is unconstitutional to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, etc. However, it is not unconstitutional to discriminate against people on the basis of their economic status. As a consequence, what one sees is at least extensive lack of protection for poor people under the Federal Constitution. <sup>8</sup>

*The Case Milliken v. Bradley* involved the Detroit Public Schools and made it very difficult to desegregate across school district boundary lines. In other words, suburban schools can not be forced into a desegregation plan. Given this, it is almost guaranteed that separate and unequal education will exist in many of these urban and northern school districts. <sup>9</sup>

One of the major issues that we face in terms of providing black children with equal opportunities is tracking. Labeling children is a form of discrimination. We have got to change this system. But even in 1994, we do not want to send cases to the Supreme Court because it is a conservative court that's not inclined to do much for us in these areas.

## **Immigration and Racial Diversity is Changing America Today**

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Except for Native Americans, no one is from America. It is estimated that at least 170 ethnic groups live in the United States. The capacity of this country to absorb so many different people and at the same time, forge binding ties among them is an incredible feat. <sup>10</sup>

Throughout America's history, waves of immigrants have changed this nation. Until the second half of this century, most immigrants arrived from Europe. In the 1980 more than half of all immigrants were Asians. Many others from the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, and India along with Mexico are the chief sources of immigration. China, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba follow close behind. <sup>11</sup>

The flow of people from those countries continues to change America gradually. For example, African Americans are currently the largest minority group, making up 12 percent of the total population. Hispanic are the second largest racial minority. They make up seven percent of the population. However, Hispanics are expected to become the largest ethnic minority in the United States. <sup>12</sup>

Most people came to America because of economic hardship, religious persecution and political oppression. Over the last 50 years, people of European ancestry have blended almost completely into the melting pot. About 80 percent of all Polish, Italian, and Irish-American now marry someone outside their ethnic group. This is also true for 50 percent of Jews and Greek-Americans. Thirty percent of Asian-Americans and Hispanic are marrying outside their ethnic groups. Blacks have the smallest percentage, 1-2 percent, marrying outside their ethnic group. In 1991, however, the Census Bureau estimated almost 230,000 interracial marriages between blacks and whites. <sup>13</sup>

Putting religion with ethnicity is common in the United States. Religious freedom in this country is one of the major reasons so many ethnic groups can live together peacefully. This represents a victory for the American

experiment.

Because of the amount of immigrants in this nation, the United States has a diversity that has changed the concept of what it means to be an American. This diversity makes us more interesting and viable than any one group by itself.

In 1792, when the motto “ E. Pluribus Unum,” was adopted, it referred to the union forged from 13 separate colonies. Subsequently, it has come to suggest the ties that bind the remarkable array of diverse people who have settled here. Even though many different American nationalities exist, that does not mean all Americans are exactly alike or must become uniform to be real Americans. It simply means that a genuine national community does exist and that it has its own distinctive principle of unity, its own history, and its own appropriate sense of belonging. However, since that time we have developed a common culture in America. This culture allows us to respect all nationalities as real Americans. If America is to be free, this must be so.

## **Our Common Culture**

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The many generations of immigrants to this nation have been people of courage, endurance, and determination. We all have faced, but some more than others, ethnic, cultural, financial, educational, language, and social barriers when settling in the United States. Our belief in faith, freedom, family, work, and country has strengthened our national life and culture.

Regardless of race, most Americans’ common culture is composed of three central elements: The democratic ethic, the work ethic, and the Judeo-Christian ethic or similar religious ethic.

The democratic ethic has its roots in the Declaration of Independence. This ethic recognizes the truth of human equality and the fact that all people are endowed by their creator with inalienable rights. The democratic ethic emphasizes freedom, tolerance, and respect for the rights of all. It also encourages everyone to develop his or her potential to the utmost.

The work ethic emphasizes the virtues of industry and diligence, a passion for excellence, respect for personal effort. Economic success in this country tends to promote respect rather than resentment and envy, and this has fostered a hearty spirit of enterprise.

The Judeo Christian ethic provides the fundamental ideals that historically shaped our entire political and social system. These ideals help make us a genuine community, but we are officially a secular nation.

Historically our culture was manufactured by the upper stratum of society. However, this is no longer true. One thing unique about our common culture is that it is not something manufactured solely by the upper stratum of society. It holds truths that all Americans can recognize and examine for themselves. These truths are passed from generation to generation: in the family, classroom, and religious institutions.

Our common culture remains strong and healthy. It will remain so as long as its fundamental premises are transmitted to succeeding generations. One way to do that is through our educational system. Here we can sharpen our students’ understanding of America, its history, and the opportunities and responsibilities of citizenship in a free society.



Americans do not share a common ancestry and/or a common blood. What we share in common is a system of laws and beliefs that shaped the establishment of this country. Our society won't survive without the values of tolerance. And, cultural tolerance amounts to nothing without cultural understanding. The challenge facing America will be the shaping of a truly common culture that is responsive to the long-silenced cultures of color. If we give up the ideal of America as a plural nation, we've abandoned the very experiment America represents. This is too great a price to pay.

We must remember that America is a family. There may be differences and disputes in our family, but we must not allow it to be broken into pieces. We need to find strength in our diversities. We need to fight racism and get rid of it once and for all.

Signs of open prejudice continues to appear among the people of America. It is not a warfare among ethnic groups as we see in other parts of the world, but suddenly words like "turf" have become part of our language. America is not a melting pot. We are heterogeneous. We are a pluralistic society engaged in a great experiment whereby people of different ethnic backgrounds, ancestry, religions, and race come together as one ever new society.

## LESSON PLAN I

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Objective: student will explore how we have developed stereotyped ideas about color. What do we mean when we say, for example, "I am blue"?

Blue is sad. (I am blue)

Yellow means cowardice (I am yellow)

Green means young or unskilled. (I am green)

Ask students to consider how stereotyped ideas might have developed. If there are students in the class from different backgrounds, they may have very different associations with these colors. Discuss how such stereotypes can vary from culture to culture.

If White Means Good, Then Black Means . . .

Children quickly learn to make the association between white— good, black—evil, and to transfer this association to people. The many references in our society that represent black as evil or bad serve to reinforce this association. Help students become more aware of how their attitudes are conditioned by discussing expressions that include black. List examples given by students. How many of them are positive, how many negative?

blackmail	blackeye	blackhead	black market
black flag	black lie	black-hearted	black mark
black rage	black mood	black magic	black humor
blackball	blackout	black sheep	in the black
black death	in black and white	blacken	black depression

What does black mean in each of these expressions? What does black mean when we are talking about a person's skin color? Does the word black used in Black Power and Black is beautiful have any connection with the expression listed? These are important questions for students to discuss in order to eliminate the stereotype that black is bad.

## LESSON PLAN II

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### ***Human Rights Day Celebration***

Objective: Student will celebrate "Human Rights Day"

Activity: Human Rights Day celebrates the Proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations (1948). This day provides an opportunity for students to discuss what Human Rights are. Ask each one to complete this sentence: Every human being has the right to . . .

Related to Human rights is the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. A group of students can present the Bill of Rights as part of a special program. They can prepare it as a reader's theater presentation.

Reference Sheet

Use this reference to do lesson plan II. The United States Bill of Rights

(figure available in print form)

## LESSON PLAN III

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### ***UNDERSTAND INSTITUTIONAL RACISM***

Objective: Students will determine the views of community leaders.

Procedure: Students will interview a local leader regarding racism in their community.

Below is a list of people in your community that can be interviewed.

INTERVIEW WHAT IS SAID WHAT IS DONE

MAYOR

MEMBER OF THE

CITY COUNCIL

CITY ATTORNEY

PRESIDENTS OF THE

LARGEST BANKS  
COLLEGE PRESIDENT  
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
LEADERS OF  
COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS  
EDITORS OF  
LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

During your interview, remember to maintain a healthy objective in listening to the responses of local leaders. Evaluate what is being said about efforts to end racism with what is actually being done. Record the responses of these leaders in the chart. Discuss your interview in the class as a group. Write your feelings or opinion about the interview. Does this change your vision?

## LESSON PLAN IV

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Objective: Student will make a wanted poster for the ideal American

WANTED!

THE IDEAL AMERICAN

You are to make a Wanted Poster for The Ideal American in a particular period of history. By using history books and other sources, you are to describe the perfect American for one of the periods of history listed below:

(check the one you will do)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1700 \_\_\_\_\_ 1900  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1750 \_\_\_\_\_ 1950  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1800 \_\_\_\_\_ 1970  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1850 \_\_\_\_\_ 1980  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2000

Remember, this does not have to be a real person! The person should, however, represent the ideal person for the period which you choose.

A. Place a drawing, photograph or magazine picture of the ideal American on a sheet of colored construction paper. Put the answers for B below the picture.

B. Supply the following information about your Ideal American:

Age

Sex

Religion

Address

Race

Occupation

Economic class

Married? Single? Divorced?

Number of children

Years of schooling

Interests or hobbies

Ten qualities or personality characteristics which make this person the Ideal American for this period of history

## LESSON PLAN V

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### ***Develop a Global Vision of Eliminating Racism***

Objective: Students will create a vision statement of the importance of eliminating racism.

Do This:

Discuss: What is racism?

Procedure: In a vision statement students will describe their feelings about the global significance of ending racism and honoring diversity. A global vision statement can be an extension of the personal, family, community, and national vision statements. As with the other vision statements, this global statement is a tool of empowerment, helping students find a larger context for the individual actions they can take. This vision

statement can also be an affirmation, a poem, a song, a painting, a ritual, or other forms of creative expressions.

Students will share their vision with each other. Students can also communicate through use of technology by way of internet or other use of technology to broaden their information base. This can be done inter-district or globally.

#### *FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES: HOMEWORK*

1. Create a collage of people around the world of different colors, ways of life, and faiths. Use a magazine like TIME or National Geographic.
2. Place your global vision statement in some prominent location (a refrigerator, door, bathroom, mirror, etc.)
3. Take time to read your statement daily.
4. Change your vision statement as you learn more about the global efforts to end racism and honor diversity.

#### *TEACHER COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS*

## **LESSON PLAN VI**

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### ***DISCOVER YOUR FAMILY'S ETHNIC BACKGROUND***

Objective: Students will accept their own uniqueness to accept the uniqueness of others.

Discuss: Diversity/Uniqueness/Ethnicity

Activities:

- The students will create a family tree. They will start by recalling their relatives they know, then ask those that are living to recall the relatives they know. When possible, they will collect stories about their relatives.
- The students will read about the history of the ethnic groups within their families heritage.
- The students will make a list of what they like most about their ethnic background.
- The students will collect photographs of their ancestors.
- The students will consider what stereotypes their ethnic background that they would most like to release.

## FIELD TRIPS

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African-American Cultural Center at Yale

211 Park Street

New Haven, CT

(203) 432-4131

British Art Center

1080 Chapel Street

New Haven, CT

(203) 432-2800

New Haven Public Library

133 Elm Street

New Haven, CT

(203) 787-8502

Peabody Museum of Natural History

Whitney Avenue

(203) 432-5050

Yale Art Gallery

111 Chapel Street

New Haven, CT

(203) 432-0600

## SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

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Please record Yes or No responses to each of the following questions.

- Yes No
1. Do your principal, teachers and other staff members use language that is free from racial, ethnic, and sexual slurs at all times?
  2. Does your school have a policy that explicitly condemns racially, sexually, and ethnically biased behavior?

3. Does your school routinely collect achievement data by race, gender, and ethnicity?
4. Does the planning for all school events awards, and programs reflect the diversity of people in the school by race, gender, and ethnicity?
5. Do all students and staff understand the meaning of the term culture?
6. Does your school have a plan for improving intergroup relations?
7. Have you thought about your own gender, racial, ethnic and social class identity and the various ways in which you are similar to, yet different from, the demographic groups to which you belong?
8. Have you thought about how your own gender, race, ethnicity and social class have influenced your learning?
9. Do you honestly believe that you are capable of succeeding, regardless of your racial or ethnic group, and gender?
10. Are you honestly willing to change your behavior from ways that are comfortable to you, to ways that may be more helpful to people who are different from you?

Record ten points for each yes answer that you have recorded. Then calculate your score. 90-100 is excellent, 89-80 is good, 79-70 is fair. Your school has many of the components that contribute to a positive pluralistic culture. Recognize your success and identify those areas that still need work. It's likely that you need better coordination and institutionalization of your efforts. If your score is lower than 70, you have a great deal of work to do. Give yourself some time for introspection. You may find that it's easier to talk this over with someone whose background is similar to yours first. Without meaning to harm others, you may be unconsciously perpetuating some culturally biased behaviors.

## VOCABULARY WORD LIST

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1. Attitude is a position assumed for a specific purpose.
2. *Brown v. Topeka, Kansas Board of Education* examined the impact of the desegregation of America's Public schools. The Supreme Court ruled that separate facilities were inherently unequal and that segregated schools would no longer be legal.
3. *Case Milliken v. Bradley* involved the Detroit public schools and made it very difficult to desegregate across school district boundary lines. Suburban schools can not be forced into a desegregation plan.
4. *Change* is to become different in a position that has been assumed for a specific purpose.
5. *Civil Rights* is private, non-political privileges: specifically, exemption from involuntary servitude, as established by the 13th and 14th amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by certain acts of Congress.
6. *Culture* is the sum total the attainment and activities of any specific period, race, or people, including their implements, handicrafts, agriculture, economics, music, art, religious beliefs, traditions, language, and story.
7. *Democratic ethic* recognizes the truth of human equality and the fact that all people are endowed by their creator with inalienable rights.
8. *Desegregation* is the act of ending segregation of races in schools and public facilities.
9. *Discrimination* means to show differential treatment or bias: sometimes, unjust distinction.
10. *Diversity* means capable of various forms or variety.
11. *Immigration* is the total number of aliens entering a country for permanent residence during a

stated period.

12. *Institutionalize Racism* is any institution that permits race to affect the distribution of benefits from social policies.

13. *Judeo Christian ethic* provides the fundamental ideals that historically shaped our entire political and social system.

14. *Pluralistic* is the existence within a society of diverse groups as in religion, race, or ethnic origin, which contribute to the cultural matrix of the society while retaining their distinctive characters.

15. *Prejudice* is a judgment or opinion, favorable or unfavorable, formed beforehand or without examination.

16. *Racism* is an excessive and irrational belief in or advocacy of the superiority of a given group, people, or nation, on racial grounds alone.

17. *Scientific Racism* is any false view of race that equates racial differences with racial superiority or inferiority.

18. *Segregation* is the provision for separate facilities, as in housing, schools, and transportation, for whites and non-whites.

19. *Stereotype* is the act of reducing the complex, multidimensional nature as human beings, or other things, to a single statement, image, or attitude.

20. *Work ethic* emphasizes the virtues of industry and diligence, a passion for excellence, respect for personal effort.



## Notes

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1. Rethimon Otter, "Racism" *Encyclopedia Britannica* , Encyclopaedia Inc., 1989, pp. 800-81.
2. Ibid., p. 881.
3. Stokley Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 4.
4. Lori S. Robinson, *Emerge* , "Court Cases Are Still Key", (Arlington, VA: Emerge Communications Inc., 1994), p. 26.
5. Louis L. Knowles, *Institutional Racism In America* , "From No Response to False Response," New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1969), p. 115.
6. Ibid., p. 28.
7. Lori S. Robinson, *Emerge* , Court Cases Are Still Key", (Arlington, VA: Emerge Communications, Inc. 1994), p. 28.
8. Ibid., p. 28.
9. Ibid., p. 28.
10. Patrick Fischetti, *Leadership* , "Diversity Awareness" (New York: Publishers Associates, March 1993), p. 16.
11. Ibid., p. 16.
12. Ibid., p. 17.
13. Ibid., p. 17.

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Free Library of Philadelphia. 19th Vine Sts., Pa 19103. *To Be Black in America* , a bibliographic essay arranged in broad categories; materials included suitable for use by junior and senior high school students. (free).

*Multicultural Lesson Plans* - A resource book of 25 lesson plans promoting multicultural awareness for use in elementary, middle, junior and senior high school classrooms. To receive a copy, send a check for \$4.00 payable to: Lifetouch Multicultural Lesson Plans, c/o Mail'n Box, 13722 Nicollet Avenue South, Burnsville, Minnesota 55337.

National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth St., Nw., Washington, D.C. 20036. Index to Multiethnic Teaching Materials and Teacher Resources, an annotated bibliography in four sections.

*Proud to be me!* A collection of Concepts for Building Self-Esteem in the Classroom-A resource book for elementary, middle and junior high school teachers containing 40 award-winning lesson plans designed to develop self-esteem, in addition to 50 "classroom classics" ideas submitted by teachers. To receive a copy, send a check for \$8.95 payable to: Lifetouch Proud to be me! c/o Mail'n Box, 13722 Nicollet Avenue South, Burnsville, Minnesota 55337.

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