

Curriculum Council DEI- CRSE Resources: Teaching Honest and Hard History

Presented by:
April Francis-Taylor, ESBOCES
Director of DEI



Overarching Themes for DEI/CRSE 22-23

Share

“CR-SE Framework and Curriculum Reviews”

“Equity Walks for Classroom Environments”

“Empowering Student Groups using the CR-SE Framework”





Welcoming and Affirming Environment

Collective responsibility to learn about student cultures and communities.

Close relationships with Students & Families.

Social-Emotional Learning Programs.

Materials that represent and affirm student identities.



Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

Current events incorporated into instruction.

Students as co-designers of curriculum.

Resources written and developed by racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse perspectives.

Instructional strategies that adapt to diverse learning styles.



High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction

Student-Led Civic Engagement.

Critical Examination of Power Structures.

Project-Based Learning on Social Justice Issues.

Student Leadership Opportunities.



Ongoing Professional Learning and Support

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training, examining implicit bias and interrogation of beliefs and assumptions.

Support in aligning curriculum and instruction to the histories, languages, and experiences of traditionally marginalized voices.

STUDENTS

DISTRICT LEADERS
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
SCHOOL LEADERS
TEACHERS

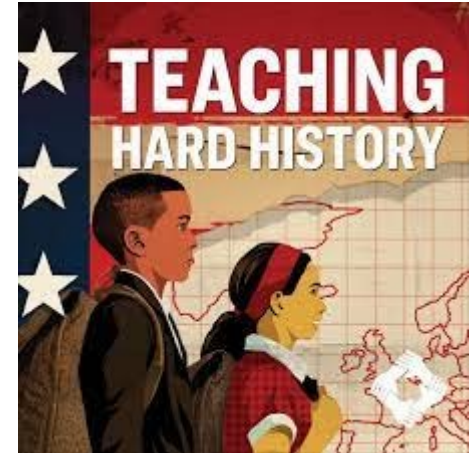
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICYMAKERS
HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY
STUDENTS AND FAMILIES



What are some “Hard” History Topics?

Teaching about issues related to slavery, lynching, Jim Crow, race, the Holocaust etc. includes addressing tough topics such as violence, murder, terrorism, racism, and more – not just as remnants of things long ago and far away, but also in how they are still at play in today’s society.

This can be challenging for teachers and students alike. To ensure effective and successful teaching and learning, preparation is key, otherwise, as Thomas Edison wisely said, “A good intention, with a bad approach, often leads to a poor result.”



What is curricular harm?

[NATION](#)

Rochester City School District

Add Topic +

New York teacher on leave after allegedly making Black students pick cotton



Justin Murphy
Rochester Democrat

Published 9:39 a.m. ET May 2, 2022 |

New York middle school teacher under investigation for 'funny' slavery assignment



Ny Magee | Sep 24, 2019



How can we avoid causing “harm” through the curriculum?

When preparing to cover issues pertaining to slavery, lynching, Jim Crow, issues of race, The Holocaust, etc., it is important that educators consider:

1. Their own biases and/or discomfort surrounding the issues.
2. Be willing to re-think, re-learn, and reflect.
3. Reach out to their network, colleagues and supervisors who will be interested in exploring these themes, and develop partners and advocates with strong standing both within your school, the community, and at large. (i.e. NAACP, LI Jewish Community Relations Council, University Professors)
4. Know yourself, your school and community
5. Include social emotional strategies when lesson planning
6. Incorporate “accountable” talk strategies to help guide student conversations

<https://k12database.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2019/06/TipsControversialIssues.pdf>



A TEACHING TOLERANCE GUIDE

LET'S TALK!

DISCUSSING RACE, RACISM AND OTHER
DIFFICULT TOPICS WITH STUDENTS



TEACHING TOLERANCE
A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

“Wanting to avoid discomfort or conflict, many teachers avoid open conversations about race in their classrooms. These concerns, while reasonable, only underscore how important it is to find ways to make the classroom a safe space in which to talk about race and ethnicity.”

1. Assess your comfort level
2. Find Comfort in Discomfort
3. Be Vulnerable
4. Address Strong Emotions

Document link [HERE](#)



DISCUSSING RACE, RACISM AND OTHER CRITICAL TOPICS WITH STUDENTS

Avoiding conversations about race and racism can arise from our own fears of being vulnerable. As you prepare to engage students in difficult conversations, consider this question: What will a conversation about this topic potentially expose about me?

Use this graphic organizer to list three vulnerabilities you worry could limit your effectiveness and three strengths you believe will help you to lead open and honest dialogues. Finally, list specific needs that, if met, would improve your ability to facilitate difficult conversations.

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS: A SELF-ASSESSMENT

VULNERABILITIES	STRENGTHS	NEEDS
EXAMPLE: "My own family is multiracial. Can I remain calm and measured?" "I don't know enough about the issues described here. Am I 'allowed' to lead a discussion while I also learn?"	EXAMPLE: "I have good rapport with my students." "I use community resources to support learning."	EXAMPLE: "I need clearer ground rules for class discussions." "I need to learn more information about sex, gender and gender expression."



Strategy #1



K-5 STRATEGY ONE: REITERATE→CONTEMPLATE→RESPIRE→COMMUNICATE
Explain the steps in age-appropriate language: *repeat, think, breathe* and *feel*. Use symbols and words to help students visualize and demonstrate the communication expectations. Practice and model expectations several times before engaging students.



Step 1: Repeat
Say it again.



Step 2: Think
Count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.




Step 3: Breathe
In through the nose;
out through the mouth.



Step 4: Feel
Put yourself in their shoes.



Strategy #2: Check-in



Fist = I am very uncomfortable and cannot move on.

1 Finger = I am uncomfortable and need some help before I can move on.

2 Fingers = I am a little uncomfortable, but I want to try to move on.


3 Fingers = I am not sure how I am feeling.

4 Fingers = I am comfortable enough to move on.

5 Fingers = I am ready to move on full steam ahead!

8 TEACHING TOLERANCE

have been uncomfortably triggered.




Green = I am ready to go on.

Yellow = I can go on, but I feel hesitant about moving forward.

Red = I do not want to go on right now.

K-5 STRATEGY TWO: CHECK IN WITH STUDENTS

Fist-to-Five works well with many K-5 students; however, consider using the simpler **Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down** when first introducing the strategy.



Thumbs Down = Whoa! That doesn't feel good.

Thumbs to the Side = Huh? I need some help.

Thumbs Up = I am ready! Let's go!

Similar to **Spotlight**, the **Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down** strategy:



Strategy #3: Allow Time & Space to Debrief



Teaching Honest and Hard History Workshop Quick Review

Presented by ESBOCES Office of DEI

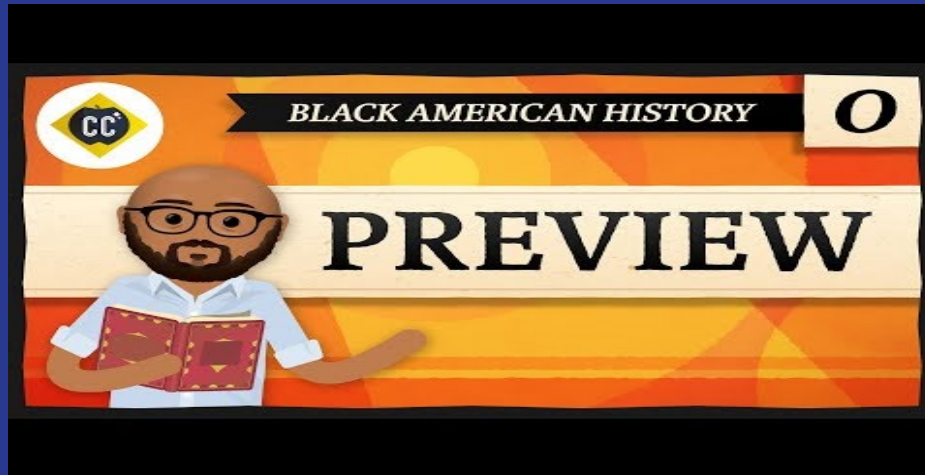


Hard History- What is the Narrative?



The First Black Members of the U.S. Congress

We have to teach about Slavery in America with the lens of Social Justice and Anti-racism...not just another history lesson.



Curriculum Deep Dive

Select one curriculum item to review

1. What resonates with you?
2. Do you see the infusion of SEL competencies?
3. How does it address the hard history topic? strategies?

A. Grade 4 NYS and Slavery Inquiry

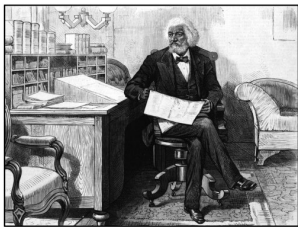
B. Words Matter: What You Need to Know About the N-word (MS level)

C. Addressing Race, Racism, and Current Events (grade 3 or 5)

D. Mansa Musa Inquiry



WHY DID NEW YORKERS HAVE DIFFERING VIEWS OF AMERICAN SLAVERY IN THE MID-1800s?



Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/frederick-douglass>

Supporting Questions

1. What were the experiences of enslaved African Americans in New York State?
2. Why did some New Yorkers show support for slavery?
3. How did some New Yorkers resist the slave system?


Words Matter

What we need to know about the “N-word”

Do Now: Using the chart, write your response to the questions in column one. What do you know about the n-word? Have you heard it? where? Do you know the history?

Do Now	After watching the video	Exit Ticket
• What do you know about the n-word?	• What does the video say?	• How does it relate to you?
• Have you heard it? where?	• How often does it happen you hear it?	• How often?
• Do you know the history?		


Addressing Race, Racism, and Current Events in Your Remote/Hybrid Environment



Objective

To explore strategies that address race and racism to foster high expectations through rigorous instruction of current events.

The estimated time for this activity is 30–45 minutes.



Stop & Think

In the NYSED's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework, the second principle is high expectations and rigorous instruction. The bullet below is part of the teacher expectations for this principle:

- Be responsive to students' experiences by providing them with a space to process current events

In the article ["Cultural Conversations: It's Never Too Early to Talk About Race,"](#) clinical psychologist Dr. Ann Hazzard shares that while educators often avoid talking about race, the "silence can communicate that race is a taboo topic or signal a lack of concern about the racial status quo." Dr. Monique T. Williams adds, "If you can't talk about [race], you can't understand it, much less fix the racial problems that plague our society."

(Key: T— Teachers SL— School Leaders, DL— District Leaders)

- If you were to ask your students about race, and what it means to them, what would they say? (T, SL)
- How will open conversations about race, racism, and current events challenge implicit biases and increase academic rigor? (T, SL, DL)

Was Mansa Musa the richest ruler in history?



Do Now: "What do you think makes someone rich?" Who are some examples of people you think are rich?"

• [Mansa Musa video](#)

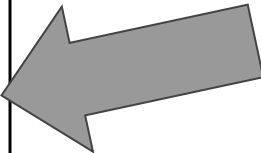
Sample 4th Grade Lesson on Slavery in America

Day 1

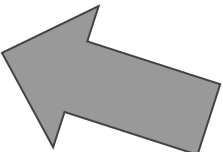
Engage (15 mins.)

Note: Suggested strategy- using the “Talking Circle” strategy from the [“Let’s Talk”](#) booklet.

1. The teacher should begin the lesson by asking students, “What do you think is a human right?” The teacher should have students share their ideas and give examples.
2. Next, the teacher should state, “*Did you know in 1948, most of the countries in the world created a document called the Universal Human Rights Declaration, do you want to know what the first human right they listed was? Let’s watch this video to see.*” Teacher should queue video: [United for Human Rights](#). (1 min.) - *So what was the first human right they listed? Why do you think that was the first one?* (have students share)
3. Next, the teacher should distribute **Source 1 Universal Human Rights Declaration**, display it on the smartboard, and state “*Let’s review some other Human Rights they listed.*” The teacher can then have a whole class read aloud. During the read aloud, the teacher can include annotation or close-read strategies. After the reading the document, the teacher can ask the following questions:
 - a. **Who created this Declaration?** (UN) **Does anyone know where they meet?** (NY)
 - b. **Why do you think they created it?** (if students mention it was after World War II- the teacher can choose to briefly share about the Holocaust and how millions of European Jews were killed based on prejudice and discrimination by the Nazi government in Germany in the 1930s-1940s)
 - c. **What is one right that stands out to you in this document? Why?** (varies)



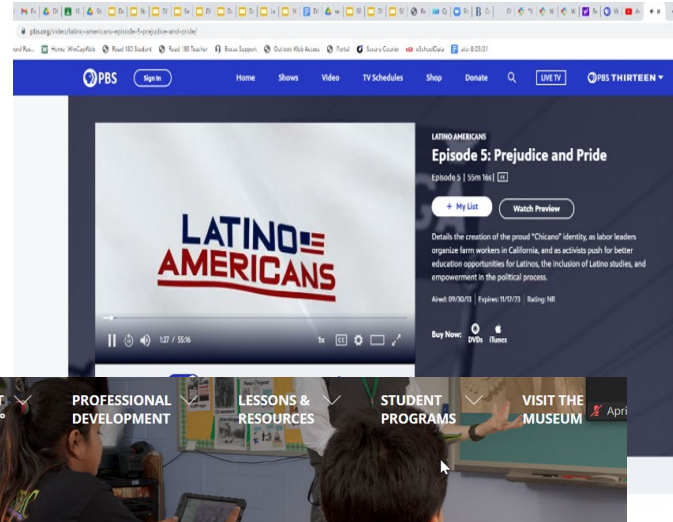
Inclusive of
social
emotional
strategies



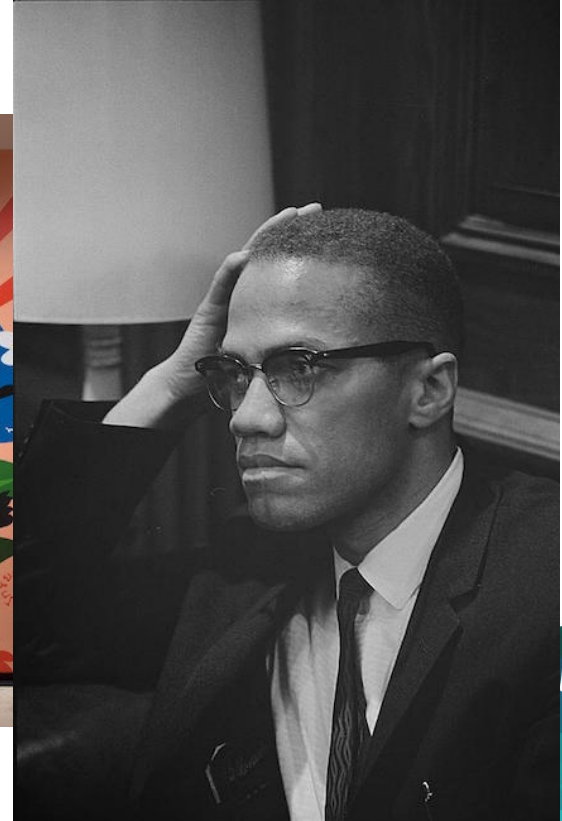
Inclusive of
social justice
lens



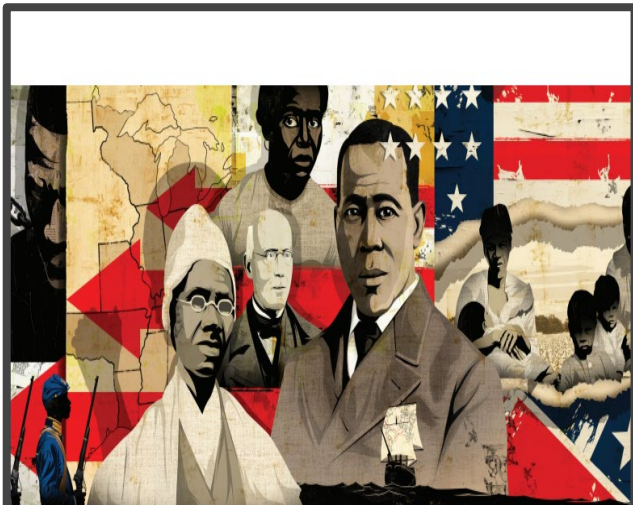
Inclusive Social Studies Curriculum: Asian American History, Latino-American History, Native American-Present Day



Inclusive History: Yuri Kochiyama and Malcolm X



Teaching Honest and Hard History Resources



A Quick Reference Guide to Teaching **Hard History**

A K-12 FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING AMERICAN SLAVERY

- [Learning for Justice](#)
- [Facing History and Ourselves](#)
- [Crash Course: Black American History](#) w/Clint Smith
- [New Visions Reconstruction Curriculum](#)
- [Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES Social Studies/ELA Grade 4, Slavery in NYS Inquiry](#)
- [Native American Knowledge 360](#)

