

North Plainfield School District

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Newsletter



JANUARY 2024
VOLUME 4



OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL FINANCIAL LITERACY CLASSES AT BIZTOWN NJ



This month, we commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We recognize the significance and relevance of Dr. King's words, his actions, the legislation that came about as a result of his activism and the impact of his work all over the world. In honor of his legacy, we continue to strive toward a sense of belonging for everyone.

This month, we observe Holocaust Remembrance Day. The date of January 27th was chosen to commemorate the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camps in 1945. This day reminds us of the mass murder of 11 million people, 6 million of which were Jews.

January is also Muslim Heritage Month in the state of New Jersey. In the spring of 2023, Governor Murphy signed a joint resolution establishing the month of January as Muslim Heritage Month. New Jersey is home to nearly 300,000 Muslim Americans, the highest percentage of Muslim residents in the nation.

January is Poverty Awareness Month. This month is used to raise awareness and call attention to the growth of poverty in America which affects about 12% of our nation.



DATES TO REMEMBER

Muslim Heritage Month

Poverty in America Awareness Month

Holocaust Remembrance

Jan 1

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Jan 6

FEAST OF EPIPHANY

Jan 7

EASTERN ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS

Jan 15

MAKAR SANKRANTI

Jan 15

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Jan 25

MAHAYANA NEW YEAR



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER THIS MONTH:

- WHAT MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS DID MUSLIM LEADERS AND SCHOLARS MAKE TO WORLD CIVILIZATION?

- WHERE IN OUR CURRICULUM CAN WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND INCLUDE MUSLIM EXISTENCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS WITHIN THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE?

- WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO INCORPORATE THE MUSLIM-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN OUR STUDY OF THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE?

READING SHELF

All books are available in our school libraries and through the North Plainfield Public Library



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that ten years before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, a deranged woman tried to stab him to death at a Harlem book signing on September 20, 1958 and nearly succeeded.

In his final, and most apocalyptic sermon, delivered on the eve of his assassination, Dr. King recalls a letter written by a young girl, a student from White Plains High School after he was stabbed. Of all the letters he had received during his recovery, this is the only one he remembers. Hear the portion of the speech when he talks about this letter here: Martin Luther King "If I had Sneezed" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgq6l-owOG8>

This very short video is a succinct and thought-provoking teaching resource as we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King.



15 BOOKS THAT OFFER INSIGHT INTO POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

1. ***Each Kindness*** by Jacqueline Woodson (Ages 5-8) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/Bi2pQJdMc9M>
2. ***The Cot in the Living Room*** by Hilda Eunice Burgos (Ages 4-8) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/tz8bV7Glycw>
3. ***Free Lunch*** by Rex Ogle (Ages 9-12) Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPT4PVb8Koc>
4. ***The Hundred Dresses*** by Eleanor Estes (Ages 6-9) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/1PnuFjij7-l>
5. ***How to Build a Heart*** by Maria Padian (Ages 12-17)
6. ***With the Fire on High*** by Elizabeth Acevedo (Ages 13-18)
7. ***Isaiah Dunn is My Hero*** by Kelly J. Baptist (Ages 8-10)
8. ***Last Stop on Market Street*** by Matt De La Pena (Ages 3-7) https://www.youtube.com/embed/zk6CWvW_5-s
9. ***Okay for Now*** by Gary D. Schmidt (Ages 10-12)
10. ***Still a Family*** by Brenda Reeves Sturgis (Ages 4-8) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/a5gvcc7TV2g>
11. ***Lulu and the Hunger Monster*** (Ages 5-9) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/8pQjShMz7kl>
12. ***Illegal*** by Bettina Restrepo (Ages 13-17)
13. ***A Chair for My Mother*** by Vera B. Williams (Ages 4-8) <https://www.youtube.com/embed/DEoEEWEnool>
14. ***Shelter*** by Christie Matheson (Ages 8-12)
15. ***Tyrell*** by Coe Booth (Ages 14-18)

