

Critical Race Theory (CRT) in Prescott Unified School District (PUSD)

What is CRT?

Recently, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is frequently mentioned in the media and public conversations and often has a different meaning to different people and due to the uncertainty of what CRT is and when it is taught, it has become a controversial topic for many people. CRT originated in the 1970's as an analytical tool for law students to evaluate the impact of historical and present day racism on the legal system and public policies. It is primarily used in higher education law, psychology, and sociology courses.

Is CRT taught in PUSD?

No. CRT is not taught in PUSD. PUSD does not have any classes or curricula that incorporate CRT. The tenets of CRT are not part of the Arizona state educational standards.

What is taught in PUSD?

As required by the state social studies education standards, PUSD teaches critical thinking, inquiry, and varying perspectives around major concepts and topics. Lessons are taught in accordance with the Arizona state education standards which can be found [here](#). Appendix A provides a few grade level examples of social studies standards. In these standards, teachers are required to teach multiple perspectives of history including those of enslaved peoples as well as the history of racism, racial segregation laws, genocide, women's suffrage, ADA, and other topics.

America is one of the few countries where critical evaluation of our history is accepted and valued. One of the things that makes America strong is we live in a society where dissent and criticism are tolerated. We all have biases shaped by our life experiences and teachers support students with all perspectives and experiences.

What is racism?

Racism is prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. PUSD seeks to support all students no matter their race, ethnicity, or cultural background. Racism, racial slurs, and hate crimes are not tolerated in our district.

What is equity?

Equity has become a politically charged term. In PUSD, equity means removing barriers to academic success and providing opportunities to learn and be successful. Students with special needs are provided specialized curriculum and teaching techniques to help them succeed. Students learning English are given tools to access the English language. Students with medical or health concerns are given accommodations so that they can learn. Students with food insecurities at home are provided free food at school. Equity is about addressing gaps that may prevent students from learning. Some argue

that providing help to remove barriers for students takes away services from those who don't need extra support. That simply is not true. Helping one student doesn't mean another student is neglected.

What do I do if I still have questions?

We appreciate your interest in your child's education. If you have questions, we recommend starting as close to the source as possible with your child's teacher. This will allow you to understand what is being taught in the classroom and the intent behind the instruction. If you still have concerns, next would be to contact your school principal. For questions regarding state education standards, we recommend contacting the state school board or department of education.

Misconceptions	Clarity
Students are taught to feel guilty about being white.	Students are taught to feel included and accepted at school.
Students should judge or blame other races.	Students are taught to respect everyone.
Schools are teaching students to believe in Marxism/Socialism/Communism.	Schools value individuality and do not endorse political parties or ideologies.
Schools only address the needs of students who need extra help.	All students learn differently and are given tools for success.

Appendix A

Examples of Arizona Social Study Standards

Arizona 4th Grade History Standards

- 4.H1.1 Utilizing a variety of multi-genre primary and secondary sources, construct historical narratives about cultures, civilizations, and innovations in the Americas. ▪ Key concepts include but are not limited to Olmec, Maya, Inca, Aztec, American Indians living in the Americas before and after European exploration, enslaved and free Africans living in the colonies, British, French, Dutch, Spanish explorers and settlers, and the thirteen colonies Cycles of conflict and cooperation have shaped relations among people, places, and environments.
- 4.H2.1 Describe the cycles of conflict and compromise that occurred in the Americas during the convergence of Europeans, American Indians, and Africans in the Americas before and after European exploration
- 4H2.2 Analyze the different approaches used by the Spanish, Portuguese, British, and the French in their interactions with American Indians.
- 4.H3.1 Examine how economic, political, and religious ideas and institutions have influenced the development of individual rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the Americas. ▪ Key concepts include but are not limited to Olmec, Maya, Inca, Aztec, American Indians living in the Americas before European exploration ▪ Key concepts include but are not limited to the influence of colonial governments on constitutional government (fundamental rights, rule of law, representative government, voting rights, separation of powers), how enslaved Africans drew upon their African past along with elements of new cultures to develop a distinct African-American culture, how religious tensions in the New England Colonies established colonies founded on religious tolerance, ways in which society expresses itself (art, music, dance, crafts, and writings), and how religious beliefs of groups like the Quakers and Spanish missionaries led to questions about the morality of slavery and ideas of equality.

Arizona High School History Standards

Thinking within this discipline involves the ability to identify, compare, and evaluate multiple perspectives about a given event to draw conclusions since there are multiple points of view about events and issues.

- HS.SP2.1 Analyze how contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.
- HS.SP2.2 Analyze the ways in which perspective shapes recorded history.
- HS.SP2.3 Demonstrate historical empathy when examining individuals or groups in the past whose perspectives might be very different from those held today.

Using inquiry in history, high school students explore a variety of peoples, events, and movements in United States history with a focus on inquiry into the evolution of American democratic principles, changes in society, economic and geographical development, and the emergence of the United States as a global power. A United States history course can be organized in a variety of ways including thematic, chronological, regional, or through case studies. Special attention should be paid to how Arizona and its diverse cultures and individuals contribute to United States history. It is expected that students in elementary and middle school will have analyzed events, documents, movements, and people in Arizona and United States history from the colonial period through the Cold War. It is recommended that this course maximize time in a manner to allow for depth of content and connection to current issues and events. The course should include but is not limited to content from the following historical eras:

- Revolution and a New Nation including but not limited to causes of the American Revolution, reasons for American victory, impact of the Revolution on politics, economy, and society, and the creation of the American political system looking at origins, and key political and social figures,
- Nation Building and Sectionalism including but not limited to territorial expansion and its impacts on external powers and Native Americans, regional tensions due to industrialism, immigration, and the

expansion of slavery, changes in the political democracy after 1800, and cultural, religious, and reform movements in the Antebellum period

- Civil War and Reconstruction including but not limited to causes, course, and impact of the Civil War on various groups in the United States, the impacts of different reconstruction plans, and the emergence of Jim Crow and segregation
- Emergence of Modern America including but not limited to industrialization, immigration and migration, progressivism, Federal Indian Policy, suffrage movements, racial, religious and class conflict, the growth of the United States as a global power and World War I and its aftermath
- Great Depression and World War II including but not limited to social, political, and economic changes during the 1920's, the role of government, impact of the depression on diverse groups of Americans, the New Deal, and the cause and course of World War II, the character of the war at home, and the impacts of the war on the United States • Postwar United States including the economic boom and social transformation of the United States, the Cold War, the impact of conflicts in Korea and Vietnam, domestic and international policies, and the struggle for civil rights and equality
- Contemporary United States including but not limited to domestic politics and policies, economic, social and cultural developments, growing international conflict and tension, 9-11 and responses to terrorism, environmental issues, poverty, globalization, nuclear proliferation, and human rights.