Black History Month
February as Black History Month
Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month, which is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. Black History Month grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans.

Black History Month 2020 Theme: "African-Americans and the Vote"
The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the ratification of the 15th Amendment on February 3, 1870. The Fifteenth Amendment gave Black men the right to vote by declaring that the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." It wasn't until the passing of the 19th Amendment in 1920 that Black women gained voting rights. However, their constitutional right was limited in many states due to discriminatory laws.

Teaching Black History
In schools and classrooms, Black History Month is an excellent time to explore the Black experience—including the history and culture of African-American people, the injustice faced by them and how that injustice has been and continues to be confronted and overcome. As with other similarly themed months, it is important
not to isolate black history and culture into one month during the year. Black history is American history and should be integrated into the curriculum throughout the school year.

This month we feature our teaching guide 10 Ideas for Teaching Black History Month as well as additional K-12 curriculum and other resources to bring the themes of Black History Month to your classroom during February and throughout the year.

Curriculum Resources: Historical

**LESSON PLAN**

**Civil Rights Act of 1964: 7 Ways to Commemorate the Anniversary**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

Seven ideas for teaching about the Civil Rights Act in your classroom to commemorate the anniversary.

**LESSON PLAN**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights: Relevancy for Today**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL
How far do we still need to go in order to achieve equality and full civil rights in the United States? Use this multi-grade curriculum unit to help students examine civil rights in the United States past and present.

LESSON PLAN

60 Years Later: The Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

Teach students about the Brown v. Board of Education ruling and analyze the modern day “school-to-prison pipeline” and the opportunity gap that exist in our public schools.
A lesson plan that pays tribute to the life and accomplishments of Shirley Chisholm, a civil rights leader and the first African American woman elected to Congress.
This lesson provides an opportunity for high school students to explore the difference between the right to vote and the ability to vote, learn more about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and reflect on some of the current day threats to voting rights and what can be done about it.
Lesson Plan

Emojis and Me

Middle School

22-year-old digital artist, O'Plérou Grebet, created his own emojis, reflecting life in contemporary West Africa. Help students learn why representing one's culture, nation and identity is important in using emojis.
**Casting of 'The Little Mermaid' Brings Pride and Prejudice**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL

An African-American actress was chosen for the role of Ariel in the remake of *The Little Mermaid*. Elementary and middle school students explore the significance of the casting decision and the impact of diversity and representation in different forms of media.

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**Representing the People: Diversity and Elections**

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

This lesson plan helps 8-12 grade students explore and understand the current landscape of elected officials and Presidential hopefuls and how the 2018 midterm election broke records and barriers regarding diversity.
On-Screen Diversity: Why Visibility in Media Matters

Our country is becoming increasingly diverse. Help students consider the importance of representation and visibility in entertainment as they examine the movies and television shows they watch for a portrayal of diversity in characters.
This lesson provides an opportunity for students to learn about the sweeping changes in U.S. currency, analyze the role of symbols and their impact and articulate their own opinions about the importance of symbols and symbolic gestures in our society.

LESSON PLAN

Believe in Something: Nike, Kaepernick and Social Change

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

Students learn about Nike's decision to feature N.F.L. player Colin Kaepernick in ad and explore and express what they strongly believe in through creative writing.
A high school lesson that provides students an opportunity to reflect on the historical context of lynching in the U.S., the current day use of the hangman’s noose, the increase use of hate symbols and explore what can be done about it.

Colin Kaepernick, via Twitter

LESSON PLAN

Noose Incidents and Their Historical Context

HIGH SCHOOL

Athletes and Activism
Throughout history, athletes have used their power and influence to stand up for social justice. In this lesson plan, students explore different opinions about the role that professional athletes should play in politics and activism.

LESSON PLAN

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?

This lesson provides an opportunity for high school students to understand more about the School-to-Prison Pipeline, learn about its history and evolution and begin to plan some activities to teach others about it and take action.
LESSON PLAN

**Black Lives Matter: From Hashtag to Movement**

HIGH SCHOOL

This high school lesson provides an opportunity for students to learn more about Black Lives Matter and the activists involved, explore the controversy about using the term “All lives matter,” and posit their point of view in writing to a person of their choice.

**The Movies, the Academy Awards and Implicit Bias**
In this high school lesson, students will reflect on their own experiences and opinions about movies, analyze demographic information about the movie industry and explore the role of implicit bias.

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LESSON PLAN

The Alt Right and White Supremacy

High school lesson plan to help students learn about the alt right and explore historical and current day examples of white supremacy.
Curriculum Resources: Race and Racism

LESSON PLAN

10 Ideas for Teaching Black History Month
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

Ten ideas for teaching about Black History Month in K-12 classrooms.
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Through review and examination of videos, articles, data research and hashtag campaigns—#1000BlackGirlBooks and #WeNeedDiverseBooks, students learn about and discuss the importance of diverse literature.

LESSON PLAN

Everyday Bias

HIGH SCHOOL

What is implicit and explicit bias? Students learn about these terms as they reflect on examples of everyday bias in the news and situations in which they have experienced or encountered everyday type of bias.
Experiences with Race and Racism

Race and racism are topics that regularly come up in the news and populate our social media feeds. 5th-7th grade students explore race and racism using a range of young people's first encounter stories.
High school lesson plan to help students explore the role of implicit bias in perceptions of African-American boys and men.

This lesson provides an opportunity for high school students to explore what microaggressions are, how they have experienced them and what can be done to counteract them.
Children and Young Adult Literature with Educator and Parent Discussion Guides

**Sulwe**

This picture book creates a whimsical and poignant story to inspire children to see their own unique beauty.

**Lillian's Right to Vote**

Students Teaching About Racism in Society (STARS), Ohio University Athens, OH
This book recalls America's battle for civil rights in an account of one woman's fierce determination to make it up the hill and make her voice heard.

The Hate U Give
The uneasy balance between two worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.

Firebird
In her debut picture book, Misty Copeland tells the story of a young girl whose confidence is fragile and who is questioning her own ability to reach the heights that Misty has reached.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

**March: Book One**

Book One of this graphic novel trilogy spans Congressman John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.
Little Melba and Her Big Trombone

Melba Doretta Listons loved the sounds of music as far back and she could remember; she overcame race and gender obstacles to become a famed trombone player, composer and arranger.

Children's Literature

The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice.

Teaching Tools
Early Childhood FAQs

The Question Corner provides a collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members interested in...

Challenging Biased Language

On a daily basis—in the lunchroom, at the grocery store, in school hallways and even at home—people hear and sometimes use words and phrases that demean or ridicule. Here are some strategies for responding.
Tips for the classroom educator to create an anti-bias learning environment.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Creating an Anti-Bias Learning Environment

Tips for the classroom educator to create an anti-bias learning environment.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

How Should I Talk about Race in My Mostly White Classroom?

Strategies for discussing race and racism in classrooms of predominately white students.
TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Guidelines for Achieving Bias-Free Communication

Be aware of words, images and situations that suggest that all or most members of a group are the same. Stereotypes often lead to assumptions that are unsupportable and...

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Making it Meaningful: Interrupting Biased Comments in the Classroom

What do you do if you think you hear one of your students make a racist, homophobic or sexist remark? Rosalind Wiseman looks at how well meaning teachers can contribute to the problem and discusses ways to do things differently.
The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's and 1960's came about out of the need and desire for equality and freedom for African Americans and other people of color. Nearly one...

Rowland Scherman for USIA, Photographer. Courtesy of U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism
Our country has a long history of youth-led movements that brought about significant social change. Young people have advocated for child labor laws, voting rights, civil rights,…

As a society, public conversations about race and racism have increased in volume and intensity. Here are some suggestions and strategies for having classroom conversations with young people about these issues.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism**

As a society, public conversations about race and racism have increased in volume and intensity. Here are some suggestions and strategies for having classroom conversations with young people about these issues.