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 Black people in U.S. history. Black History Month grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent Black people.
Black History Month 2022 Theme, "Black Health and Wellness"

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) determines the theme each year for Black History Month. They explain, "This theme acknowledges the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birthworkers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well."

Teaching Black History

In schools and classrooms, Black History Month is an excellent time to explore the Black experience—including the history, culture and achievements of Black 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 U.S. 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

What a Black Man Wants: The 15th Amendment and the Right to Vote

Civics Lesson
HIGH SCHOOL

One of the most outspoken proponents of the 15th Amendment was Frederick Douglass, a national leader of the abolitionist movement after escaping slavery. Students will analyze Douglass’s speech, "What the Black Man Wants," and his argument for why Black men should have the right to vote.
Seven ideas for teaching about the Civil Rights Act in your classroom to commemorate the anniversary.

**Lesson Plan**

**Major League Baseball and the Negro Leagues: Correcting an Injustice**

In the late 1800's, Black professional baseball players were banned from playing in the major leagues. Teach students about the history of the Negro Leagues, the segregation of Black players and MLB’s decision to make some Negro League player statistics part of MLB history.
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.

![Image of civil rights protest](https://i.imgur.com/9Q5Q5Q5.png)  
*Courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration*

**LESSON PLAN**

**Shirley Chisholm: Unbought, Unbossed and Unforgotten**

**HIGH SCHOOL**

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.
LESSON PLAN

The Selma to Montgomery March for Voting Rights

HIGH SCHOOL

High school students explore voting restrictions today and gain insight into what can be done to preserve the right to vote as they learn about the historical struggle for voting rights and the Selma to Montgomery March.

Peter Pettus, photographer. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-08102
Looking Back Reaching Forward: Exploring the Promise of Brown v. Board of Education in Contemporary Times

This curriculum unit commemorates the 60th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. High school students explore the history of school desegregation in the United States and examines current patterns of resegregation in public schools.

LESSON PLAN

Voting Rights Then and Now

Help high school students explore the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the difference between the right to vote and the ability to vote and reflect on some of the current day threats to voting rights and what can be done about it.
August 2020 marks the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Help high school students understand how racism played a role in Black women being excluded from the right to vote.
Teach about the life, challenges and accomplishments of Rosa Parks, important social activist during the Civil Rights Movement.

LESSON PLAN

What are Reparations and Should We Enact Them?

HIGH SCHOOL

The issue of reparations has a long history in the United States. Teach students about reparations for slavery and its historical context.
HELP STUDENTS EXPLORE THE PURPOSE AND ROLE OF POLICING IN THE U.S. AND IDENTIFY DIFFERENT CATEGORIES FOR THEIR VISIONS OF CHANGES IN POLICING (REFORM, TRANSFORM OR ABOLISH).
Elementary students consider different aspects of identity and learn how to use their voices to challenge bias as they look at identity and representation in media, including games, apps, TV, movies and toys.

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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.
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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**LESSON PLAN**

**Casting of 'The Little Mermaid' Brings Pride and Prejudice**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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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**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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.
LENSON PLAN

Harriet Tubman on the $20 Bill: The Power of Symbols

MIDDLE SCHOOL

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.
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.

Noose Incidents and Their Historical Context

HIGH SCHOOL

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.
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.
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.

Black Lives Matter: From Hashtag to Movement

Students learn about the history of Black Lives Matter, analyze the controversy about using the term “All lives matter” and express their point of view through opinion exercises.
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.
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.

Coronavirus and Racial Disparities

Help students understand how and why COVID-19 disproportionately affects African American people and reflect on possible actions to address the disparities.
LESSON PLAN

Game Changer: Kyle Korver Speaks Truth on Privilege

HIGH SCHOOL

Using professional basketball player Kyle Korver's essay on racism and white privilege, students explore manifestations of privilege and strategize how to use it to engage in ally behavior.
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.

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.
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.
Lonnie Chavis of 'This Is Us' Writes about Racism
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL

Explore the concept of racism with young people through the perspective of This Is Us young actor Lonnie Chavis. Help students analyze the interpersonal and institutional ways that racism manifest and reflect on their own experiences.

Children and Young Adult Literature with Educator and Parent Discussion Guides

BLOG
13 Exceptional Kid Lit Books to Read for Black History Month
Recommended children’s and young adult books to read for Black History Month.
The ABCs of Black History

Letter by letter, this book honors and commemorates a story that spans continents and centuries, triumph and heartbreak, creativity and joy.

Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment

When Parker Curry came face-to-face with the portrait of First Lady Michelle Obama at the National Portrait Gallery, she didn't just see the First Lady of the U.S. She saw a queen—one with dynamic self-assurance, regality, beauty, and truth who captured this young girl’s imagination.
The Undefeated
This book/poem is a love letter to Black life in the United States. It highlights the unspeakable trauma of slavery, the faith and fire of the civil rights movement, and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes.

Sulwe
Sulwe is darker than everyone in her family and wishes she was “beautiful and bright” like her sister and mother. This picture book creates a whimsical and poignant story to
inspire children to see their own unique beauty.
Instead of sending Jordan Banks to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one.

**Hurricane Child**

Being born during a hurricane is unlucky, and twelve-year-old Caroline, who lives on Water Island in the U.S. Virgin Islands, has had her share of bad luck lately. But when a new student arrives, Caroline believes her luck is turning around.
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Lillian's Right to Vote

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.

**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
Teaching Tools

nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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.
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.

Challenging Biased Language

On a daily basis people hear and sometimes use words and phrases that demean or ridicule. Here are some strategies for responding.
TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Creating an Anti-Bias Learning Environment
Tips for the classroom educator to create an anti-bias learning environment.

How Should I Talk about Race in My Mostly White Classroom?
Strategies for discussing race and racism in classrooms of predominately white students.
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**

**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 and more. Here are ideas for bringing social activism into the classroom and outside of the school walls.

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.