

Teaching about Racism, Violence, Inequity and the Criminal Justice System



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For the past several years, there have been incidents of police officers involved in the deaths of African-American and Latino men. In many of these cases, police officers were not indicted and/or convicted when brought to trial. These cases have brought about a wide range of emotions, conversations, policy proposals, protest and actions. Because this is an important conversation that teachers and parents and family members want to have with young people, below are relevant lesson plans, related curricula and additional anti-bias resources and strategies to help you discuss this topic with your youth in school and at home.

Curriculum Resources on Bias, Race and Injustice

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.



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Exploring Solutions to Address Racial Disparity Concerns

HIGH SCHOOL

This high school lesson will help students reflect on some of the underlying problems and issues that have emerged from cases like those involving Eric Garner and Michael Brown, undertake research and present viable solutions.





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LESSON PLAN

Experiences with Race and Racism

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL

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.



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LESSON PLAN

Freddie Gray & Baltimore Unrest: Exploring the Case Using Op-Eds

This lesson provides an opportunity for high school students to discuss the case of Freddie Gray's death and the protests that took place in Baltimore and elsewhere. In the lesson, students will learn more about the case, read and analyze several op-eds about it and use what they learned to write their own argumentative essays with a specific point of view and evidence to support their positions.



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LESSON PLAN

Privilege, Discrimination and Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System

HIGH SCHOOL

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the killing of Michael Brown through the lens of race, privilege and power. Students will learn more about unearned privilege, examine the various levels of racial disparities in the criminal justice system and explore the role white privilege plays in the different interactions whites and people of color have with community service providers, such as law enforcement.





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LESSON PLAN

Self-Defense and Racial Profiling

HIGH SCHOOL

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to discuss the homicide of Renisha McBride, who was shot to death while seeking help after being in a car accident. Students will analyze the role of self-defense and racial profiling.



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LESSON PLAN

Social Justice Poetry

MIDDLE SCHOOL



AP Photo/The Miami Herald, Emily Michot

LESSON PLAN

When Perception and Reality Collide: Implicit Bias and Race

HIGH SCHOOL

High school lesson plan to help students explore the role of implicit bias in perceptions of African-American boys and men.



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Educator and Parent Resources for Discussing Issues of Race and Activism with Young People

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.



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Helping Students Make Sense of News Stories about Bias and Injustice

When there are national news stories that involve incidents of bias and injustice, young people want to be part of the conversation.





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TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Empowering Young People in the Aftermath of Hate (en Español)

Tools, tips and strategies for what educators and family members can do to help young people discuss and deal with the aftermath of hate-inspired events.



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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.





Lead Beyond / CC BY 2.0

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

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,...



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BLOG

Beyond Ferguson and Staten Island: Where Do We Go From Here?

In the wake of two grand jury decisions—in Ferguson, MO and Staten Island, NY—not to indict the police officers who were involved in the killing of black men, the time has come to...

BLOG

When Injustice Goes Unchecked and Concealed, What Message Does This Send to Children?

Thirteen months after Laquan McDonald was shot and killed by Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke, the recorded incident was released to the public. The day before ...



BLOG

Now More Than Ever: Why We Need to Address Inequity and Justice in Schools

We live in an increasingly pluralistic, multicultural and connected world. In order to prepare students to live, learn and eventually work successfully in society, w...



Gun Violence and Mass Shootings

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about mass shootings, violence, guns and gun laws.



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School Discipline and the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Behavior that once led to a trip to the principal's office and a detention, now often leads to suspension, expulsion and/or arrest. Use these tips for parent/family roundtable discussion with youth about incidents of harsh school discipline.





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BLOG

What Should We Tell Our Children About Charleston?

As we grieve, protest and further investigate the horrific murder of nine African American parishioners at the historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, many people are aski...



Children's Literature with Educator and Parent Discussion Guides and Other Books

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The Hate U Give

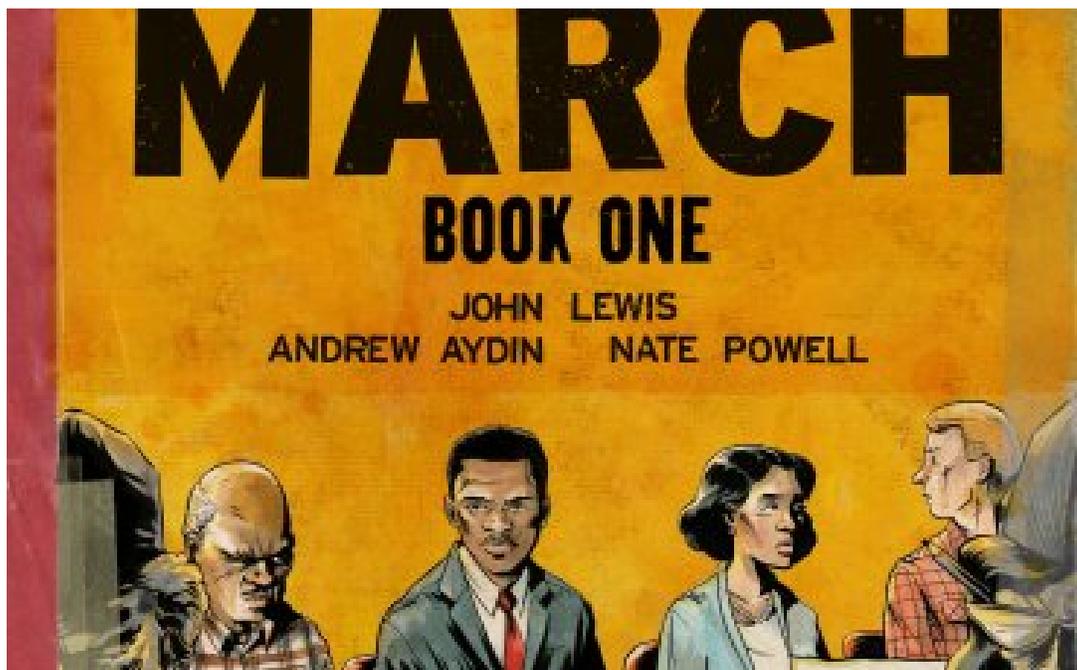
The uneasy balance between two worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.



CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

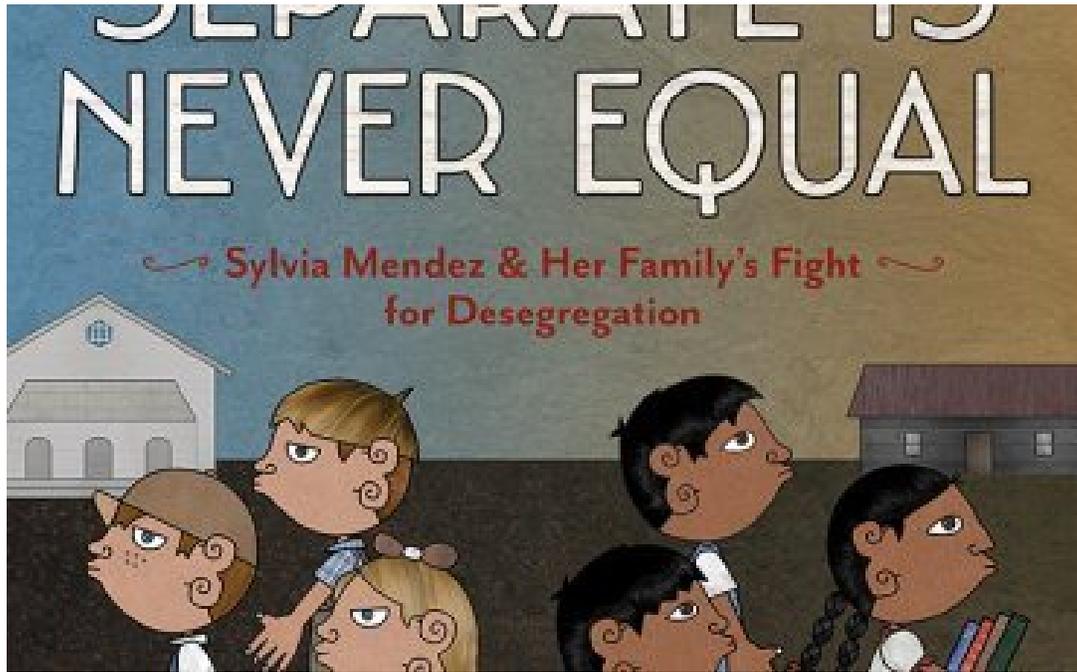
March: Book One

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.



Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation

Sylvia Mendez and her brothers are excited to attend the neighborhood schools but are turned away and told they have to attend the Mexican school instead.



Children's Literature

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