



Civil Rights Act at 60: The Black and African American Experience in the United States

Commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act and 70th Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education ruling with Sphere! Students will explore the historical significance of this landmark legislation protecting civil liberties and rights through primary sources, literature, and multimedia resources. Suitable for both English and American history classes, this unit encourages critical thinking and discussion as students reflect on the themes of equality and justice.

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss a work of art as a foundation to the unit students are starting.
- Communicate with the class about the art and about the plans for the unit as a foundation for community building.

Essential Questions

- How does art shape our lives and communities?
- What can we learn about the world around us by the art we look at together?
- How do artists determine goals for creating and sharing their views with others?
- How do artists communicate effectively?

Media

- [Cbabi Bayoc \(press\): Young Lion Quartet](#)
- A video interview of the artist should be chosen to show the class.

Note: This lesson doesn't have to be taught through the lens of Cbabi Bayoc; any artist you feel comfortable with should and can be used to introduce the unit.

Warm-Up

Before starting, review the norms for your class or use this time to create norms.

These are some examples of norms, though it is important to note that students should create these norms as a class:

- Respect other people's opinions.
- Try to understand other people's points of view; listen to understand, not to respond.
- Participate, participate, participate.
- Respect all opinions.
- Be rational in your response. Address ideas; do not attack people.

Part I: Looking at a Painting to Start a Discussion on the Unit

Use the painting to create community as part of a warm-up for the unit. Have the painting displayed on the board or have color cop(ies) for the students to view in hand or online.

Use a [Harvard Project Zero Thinking Routine](#) to have students write about the painting.

Discuss the painting: What did they notice from the thinking routine? What about it did they like? Dislike? How does it show the American experience? The African American experience?

As you talk with students about the art, you should add information about the artist. Interesting facts that will help students describe what they are saying and feeling are listed below from his website:

- Cbabi (pronounced "kuh-bob-bi") Bayoc is an internationally known visual artist and illustrator who lives in St. Louis. His subjects include family, children, music, and a bunch of other cool stuff designed with line, bold color, and phunk!
- His birth name is Clifford Miskell Jr. He adopted his name Cbabi (Creative Black Artist Battling Ignorance) during his time at Grambling State University.
- He changed his last name to Bayoc (Blessed African Youth of Creativity).

Differentiation: Students can be given the website, and they can find and share information about Cbabi.

Part II: Looking at an artist to continue the discussion

Based on how your class flows and moves, use this time to transition from learning about the painting and sharing a little bit about the artist to learning more about Cbabi (or your artist of choice) by watching a video about the artist. Ask your students the following questions:

- What did you learn about the artist from the video?
- How does this add to what you already think about the painting?

Say: "Based on what we are talking about today, what themes/ideas/topics do you think we'll be covering as the unit progresses?"

Be sure to preview the unit, briefly going over any works that will be covered.

Closing the Lesson

These can be used at the end of class to bring the topics of today's lessons together:

- What did you learn about your classmates because of the discussion of the painting?
- What did you learn about yourself because of the discussion of the painting?
- What else did you learn from this discussion?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

GRADE 9–10

- **SL.9–10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, group, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **SL.9–10.2:** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, or orally), evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- **SL.9–10.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning; the organization, development, substance, and style of their presentations are appropriate to the purpose, audience, and task.

GRADE 11–12

- **SL.11–12.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, group, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **SL.11–12.2:** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally) to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- **SL.11–12.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence while conveying a clear and distinct perspective such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning; address alternative or opposing perspectives; and create a presentation of which the

organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to the purpose, the audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

GRADES 9–10

- **RI.9–10.7:** Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

GRADES 11–12

- **RI.11–12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually or quantitatively) as well as in words to address a question or solve a problem.

GRADES 9–10

- **W.9–10.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.9–10.6:** Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically

GRADES 11–12

- **W.11–12.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.11–12.6:** Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Pacing

Note: This is just one example of how to pace the unit. It is structured as a readers and writers workshop: every day, you read from the chosen book (as in a book club) and work with a text. This is paced for a 48-minute class period. Each day's lesson also has a plan. Suggestions for books, short stories, images, and poems are below. Use anything that you know works in your district, school, or classroom.

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Introduction to the unit; creating an atmosphere for reading and discussion	“Exploring Stereotypes and Biases through AI: A Discussion on Race, Place, and Identity”	“Who Are You? Identity Maps”	Introduction to literature circles or Common Read text	Literature circles or Common Read text; introduce culminating event for the unit
Writing activity and class discussion: Cbabi Bayoc	“I Asked AI What the Typical Person from Each State Looks Like, and Here’s What It Came Up With,” by Sara Thompson, BuzzFeed	How who we are shapes how we perceive the world.	Quick Write and/or the Pomodoro reading technique Group discussion	Examples: ● Synthesis essay incorporating works from this unit ● Research paper about one of the many topics, authors, or artists from the unit ● Sketchnotes that describe the themes for the whole unit
Discuss class values and class norms				

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Read introductory book for 10 minutes Quick write activity about the reading	Writing and class discussion: focus on an artist or poet Close class by reading the assigned book	<u>Brown v. Board: How Does It Continue to Shape America?</u> Activity:	What is <i>Brown v. Board</i> and how did it shape America? (continued) Activity:	Civil Rights: Sketchnotes Choose a short story or poem to read Create a sketchnote about the chosen short story or poem.
20 minutes of reading Book discussion and close read Quick write activity about the reading	Topic Flood: Black and African Americans then and now (images, articles, and stories) Topic Flood Closing: Discuss three things learned	Topic Flood: Black and African Americans then and now (images, articles, and stories) Questions and reflection	<u>Quote, Meaning, Context, and Significance: “The Civil Rights Act of 1964”</u> Work with primary text (share Google Doc with class)	Quote, Meaning, Context, and Significance: “The Civil Rights Act of 1964” (continued) Work with primary text (share Google Doc with class)

20 minutes of reading	Read and discuss Civil Rights in fiction: two stories to read and discuss	20 minutes of reading	Work on culminating event for the unit	Culminating event for the unit due by the end of class
Book discussion and close read Quick write activity over the reading	Wagon wheel activity for discussion	Quick write activity (use critical literacy questions for discussion) Read poem with analyzing technique		

Literature and Informational Text Ideas

Note: The following literature and informational texts are suggestions to provide you with a diversity of ideological perspectives and formats. This list is not exhaustive. We encourage you to review the relevant standards in your community when selecting the best options for your students.

AP-Level Books (Fiction)

- *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
- *Giovanni's Room and Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin
- *Mama Day and Linden Hills* by Gloria Naylor
- *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson
- *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* by Ayana Mathis
- *Let Us Descend* by Jesmyn Ward
- *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead
- *An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones
- *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois* by Honoree Fanonne Jeffers
- *Books* by Toni Morrison
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
- *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- *A Gathering of Old Men* by Ernest Gaines

- *A High Wind in Jamaica* by Richard Hughes
- *Native Son* by Richard Wright
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe

Fiction

- *The Hate You Give* by Angie Thomas
- *How to Make an American Quilt* by Whitney Otto
- *Sing, Unburied, Sing* by Jesmyn Ward
- *This is My America* by Kim Johnson
- *Dear Justyce* by Nic Stone
- *The Boy in the Black Suit and Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
- *Dear Martin and Jackpot* by Nic Stone
- *I Wish You All the Best* by Mason Deaver
- *Red at the Bone* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day* by Pearl Cleage
- *Dreamland Burning* by Jennifer Latham
- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *The Awakening of Malcolm X* by Ilyasah Shabazz and Tiffany D. Jackson
- *Friday I'm in Love* by Camryn Garrett
- *Ghost Roast* by Shawneé Gibbs and Shawnelle Gibbs; illustrated by Emily Cannon
- *A Man Called Horse: John Horse and the Black Seminole Underground Railroad* by Glennette Tilley Turner
- *Passing* by Nella Larsen
- [African American Literature Book Club](#)

Nonfiction

- *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* by Zora Neale Hurston
- *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* by Clint Smith
- *High on the Hog: A Culinary Journey from Africa to America* by Jessica B. Harris
- *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* by Olaudah Equiano
- *The Souls of Black Folk* by W. E. B. Du Bois
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* by Frederick Douglass
- *Coming of Age in Mississippi: The Classic Autobiography of Growing Up Poor and Black in the Rural South* by Anne Moody

- The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row by Anthony Ray Hinton and Lara Love Hardin
- Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- The Cooking Gene: A Journey through African American Culinary History in the Old South by Michael W. Twitty
- A Real Southern Cook: In Her Savannah Kitchen by Dora Charles
- Notes from a Young Black Chef: A Memoir by Kwame Onwuachi and Joshua David Stein
- Ghetto Gastro Presents Black Power Kitchen by Jon Gray, Pierre Serrao, Osayi Endolyn, and Lester Walker
- An African American Cookbook: Exploring Black History and Culture through Traditional Foods by Phoebe Bailey
- Black Girl Baking: Wholesome Recipes Inspired by a Soulful Upbringing by Jerrelle Guy
- Star Child: A Biographical Constellation of Octavia Estelle Butler by Ibi Zoboi
- Black Food: Stories, Art, and Recipes from across the African Diaspora [A Cookbook] by Bryant Terry
- Melba's American Comfort: 100 Recipes from My Heart to Your Kitchen by Melba Wilson
- The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore
- Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson
- Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah
- Soldier: A Poet's Childhood by June Jordan
- Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde
- Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism by Bell Hooks
- Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention by Manning Marable
- The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness (Anniversary) by Michelle Alexander
- Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson
- The Heart of a Woman by Maya Angelou
- A Lesson before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines
- The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life, Freedom, and Justice by Lara Love Hardin and Anthony Ray Hinton
- Becoming by Michelle Obama
- Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man by James Weldon Johnson
- Black Boy by Richard Wright
- Official Guide to the Smithsonian: National Museum of African American History and Culture

Short Stories

- "Marigolds" by Eugenia W. Collier

- "Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin
- "Araby" by James Joyce
- "I Stand Here Ironing" by Tillie Olsen
- "The Treasure of Lemon Brown" by Walter Dean Myers
- "Sister Josepha" by Alice Dunbar Nelson
- "A Carnival Jangle" by Alice Ruth Moore Dunbar Nelson
- "Uncle Wellington's Wives" by Charles W. Chestnutt
- "The Scapegoat" by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- "Becky" by Jean Toomer
- "An Equation" by Gertrude H. Dorsey
- "Afternoon" by Ralph Ellison
- "Feet Live Their Own Life" by Langston Hughes
- "Jesus Christ in Texas" by W. E. B. Du Bois
- "Polly's Hack Ride" by Emma E. Butler
- "Mammy: A Story" by Adeline F. Ries
- "New York Day Women" by Edwidge Danticat
- "Mary Elizabeth" by Jessie Fauset
- "The City of Refuge" by Rudolph Fisher
- "Muttsy" by Zora Neale Hurston
- "He Also Loved" by Claude McKay
- "Désirée's Baby" by Kate Chopin
- "Condemned House" by Lucille Boehm
- "George Sampson Brite" by Anne Scott
- "The Woman in the Window" by Ramona Lowe
- "Mummy" by Dorothy West
- "The Bones of Louella Brown" by Ann Petry
- "Everyday Use" by Alice Walker
- "The Gift" by Kia Penso
- "Girl" by Jamaica Kincaid
- "Picture This" by Jervey Tervalon
- "The Drill" by Breena Clarke

Poetry

- Teach Living Poets
- "Counting Descent" by Clint Smith
- "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay

- "the sonnet-ballad" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "Incident" by Countee Cullen
- "Any Human to Another" by Countee Cullen
- "Love Is Not Concerned" by Alice Walker
- "It Happened in Montgomery" by Phil W. Petrie
- "Ballad of Birmingham" by Dudley Randall
- "Where I'm From" by Nilwona Nowlin
- "The Creation" by James Weldon Johnson
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "Hey Black Child" by Useni Eugene Perkins
- "My People" by Langston Hughes
- "Ego Tripping (there may be a reason why)" by Nikki Giovanni
- "Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou
- "We Wear the Mask" by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- "I, Too" by Langston Hughes
- "Dream Variations" by Langston Hughes
- "Dreams" by Langston Hughes
- "The Dream Keeper" by Langston Hughes
- "I Dream a World" by Langston Hughes
- "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes
- "Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou
- "Harlem" by Langston Hughes
- "Ain't That Bad?" by Maya Angelou
- "Knoxville, Tennessee" by Nikki Giovanni
- "The Negro Mother" by Langston Hughes
- "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou
- "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by J. Rosamond Johnson and James Weldon Johnson
- "On Liberty and Slavery" George Moses Horton
- "Praise Song for the Day" by Elizabeth Alexander
- "Frederick Douglass" by Robert Hayden
- "Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou
- "For My People" by Margaret Walker
- "Riot" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "Narrative: Ali" by Elizabeth Alexander
- "Canary" by Rita Dove

- "Booker T. and W.E.B." by Dudley Randall
- "Georgia Dusk" by Jean Toomer
- "In Memoriam: Martin Luther King, Jr." by June Jordan
- "Malcolm X, February 1965" by E. Ethelbert Miller
- "American History" by Michael S. Harper
- "The African Burial Ground" by Yusef Komunyakaa
- "A Negro Love Song" by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- "Middle Passage" by Robert Hayden
- "Ode to Big Trend" by Terrance Hayes
- "waiting on the mayflower" by Evie Shockley
- "Nina's Blues" by Cornelius Eady
- "1977: Poem for Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer" by June Jordan
- "Race" by Elizabeth Alexander
- "Manifesto, or Ars Poetica #2" by Krista Franklin
- "Green-Thumb Boy" by Marilyn Nelson
- "The Laws of Motion" by Nikki Giovanni
- "Billie Holiday" by E. Ethelbert Miller
- "American Income" by Afaa Michael Weaver
- "The Slave Auction" by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
- "Miz Rosa Rides the Bus" by Angela Jackson
- "The Gospel of Barbecue" by Honorée Fanonne Jeffers
- "Eddie Priest's Barbershop & Notary" by Kevin Young
- "A Black Man Talks of Reaping" by Arna Bontemps
- "Runagate Runagate" by Robert Hayden
- "Black Boys Play the Classics" by Toi Derricotte
- "Ode to Herb Kent" by Jamila Woods
- "Alternate names for black boys" by Danez Smith
- "Sorrow Home" by Margaret Walker
- "Dr. Booker T. Washington to the National Negro Business League" by Joseph Seamon Cotter Sr.
- "faithless" by Quraysh Ali Lansana
- "Enlightenment" by Natasha Trethewey
- "Harlem Shadows" by Claude McKay
- "Southern Gothic" by Rickey Laurentiis
- "Ghana Calls" by W. E. B. Du Bois

- "Dancing with Strom" by Nikky Finney
- "_____ my loved blacknesses & some blacknesses I knew" by Khadijah Queen
- "Afterimages" by Audre Lorde
- "[up from slobbery]" by Harryette Mullen
- "Robeson at Rutgers" by Elizabeth Alexander
- "The Fifth Fact" by Sarah Browning
- "Rwanda: Where Tears Have No Power" by Haki R. Madhubuti
- "The Great Pax Whitie" by Nikki Giovanni
- "Poem for My Father" by Quincy Troupe
- "Take Me Out to the Go-Go" by Thomas Sayers Ellis
- "Slave Sale: New Orleans" by Charles Reznikoff
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks

Media

Videos/Podcasts/Music

- TrueSouth (YouTube)
- BnBtown: Identity, Power and the Invention of Race (Podcast)
- American Experience (Podcast)
- This American Life (Podcast)
- I Am Not Your Negro by James Baldwin (documentary)
- High on the Hog (Netflix Series)
- True South (ESPN+ Series)
- The Cooking Gene (website) and The Southern Discomfort Tour
- Crash Course: Black American History with Clint Smith
- Read In Playlist from Amazon Music
- Retro Report

Children's/Picture Books

- "Ron's Big Mission" by Rose Blue and Corinne Naden and illustrated by Don Tate
- [Storyline Online](#)
- Nappy Hair by Carolivia Herron
- Amara's Farm by JaNay Brown-Wood
- You So Black by Theresa tha S.O.N.G.B.I.R.D. and illustrated by London Ladd
- Stitch by Stitch: Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley Sews Her Way to Freedom by Connie Schofield-Morrison and illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon
- Notes from a Young Black Chef (Adapted for Young Adults) by Kwame Onwuachi

- Goodnight Racism by Ibram X. Kendi and illustrated by Cbabi Bayoc

Articles/Essays

- "This I Believe" Essays NPR
- "What to a Slave Is the 4th of July?" by Frederick Douglas
- "Just Walk on By: Black Men and Public Space" by Brent Staples
- Articles in local newspapers or magazines
- "Graduation Day" by Maya Angelou
- American Rhetoric
- The 1619 Project
- These Six Black Lives Matter Murals in Kansas City May Be the Largest Project of Its Kind
- California Calls for 'Comprehensive Reparations' for Black Americans
- Valerie Complex on Being Black at Cannes: How Microaggressions Marred My Festival Experience
- A Year of Racial Justice Protests: Key Trends in Demonstrations Supporting the BLM Movement
- Scholastic wanted to license her children's book—if she cut a part about 'racism'
- A Visionary Show Moves Black History Beyond Borders

Art/Photography

- Pulitzer Prize-winning photography
- Dorothea Lange photography
- UNESCO Photo Contest
- Any works by Titus Kaphar, especially The Cost of Removal
- WPA Federal Art Project
- Cbabi Bayoc murals
- What Is the Proper Way to Display a US Flag? by Dread Scott
- The Problem We All Live With by Norman Rockwell
- The County Election by George Caleb Bingham
- Our Town by Kerry James Marshall
- African American Groundbreakers at the Smithsonian: Challenges and Achievements
- Aaron Douglas: Into Bondage and Judgement Day

Quick Prompts

Essential question: How has the Black and African American experience shaped the United States?

Respond to the quote: "Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won. You earn it and win it in every generation." —My Life with Martin Luther King Jr. by Coretta Scott King.

Respond to the quote: "We must never forget that Black History is American History. The achievements of African Americans have contributed to our nation's greatness." — Representative (NY) Yvette D. Clarke in the article "Black History Is American History" by XXX, *Huffington Post*.

Teacher Aids

- ["Three Words You Need for Your Next Hard Conversation: Oops, Ouch, Whoa"](#) by Annaliese Griffin
- ["Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" by Reading is Fundamental and "Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Doors" by NCTE](#)
- [Project Zero Thinking Routines](#)
- 180 Days: Two Teachers and the Quest to Engage and Empower Adolescents by Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle
- With Rigor for All by Carol Jago
- Why Do I Have to Read This?: Literacy Strategies to Engage Our Most Reluctant Students by Cris Tovani
- So What Do They Really Know?: Assessment That Informs Teaching and Learning by Cris Tovani
- Critical Literacy by Maureen McLaughlin