

Case Study 5: Restorative Circle

Based on a 30–45 minute class.

Guiding Question: What do we know about equity and how can we ensure it is achieved through activism?

Social Studies Framework Reference

5.6 Government: The political systems of the Western Hemisphere vary in structure and organization across time and place. (Standards: 5; Themes: GOV, CIV)

5.6c Across time and place, different groups of people in the Western Hemisphere have struggled and fought for equality and civil rights or sovereignty. Students will examine at least one group of people, such as Native Americans, African Americans, women, or another cultural, ethnic, or racial minority in the Western Hemisphere, who have struggled or are struggling for equality and civil rights or sovereignty.

Skills Focus: Gather, Use, Interpret Evidence

As a whole, these case studies are designed for students to use and interpret primary sources. Making inferences is emphasized as part of this interpretation.

New York State Standards: English Language Arts

5R2: Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.

5SL1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners; express ideas clearly and persuasively, and build on those of others.

Teaching Tolerance Standards

Justice 14 Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics

JU.3-5.14 I know that life is easier for some people and harder for others based on who they are and where they were born.

Diversity 8 Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way

DI.3-5.8 I want to know more about other people's lives and experiences, and I know how to ask questions respectfully and listen carefully and non-judgmentally.

Diversity 10 Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

DI.3-5.10 I know that the way groups of people are treated today, and the way they have been treated in the past, is a part of what makes them who they are.

Justice 11 Students will recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than representatives of groups.

Ju.3-5.11 I try and get to know people as individuals because I know it is unfair to think all people in a shared identity group are the same.

Social Studies Practice: Civic Action

Overview

Students will explore the ways people and groups in both the past and present have worked to build a more equitable community in Rochester by participating in a restorative circle. Students will also identify what in their school and community they might change.

Learning Target: I can examine how activists fought against racist policy. I can identify strategies to fight for equity today.

Teacher Resources

Case Study #5
Restorative Circle for Civic Actions

[Day 5 Case Study](#)
[Slide Deck for Day 5](#)

Share with Students

[Handout](#)
[Exit Ticket](#)

Sequence of Instruction

Pre-Teaching/Introduction

Consider the following instructional strategies and suggestions as part of this Case Study.



Vocabulary Teaching Tip

Remind students about the definitions from day 1. Emphasize 'antiracist'. Ask them who they learned about in the jigsaw who was an anti racist or a racist.

Vocabulary

Antiracist	Activism	Civic Participation	Bilingual
Civil Disobedience	Ally	Latinx	



Social-Emotional Teaching Tip

It is ok if students don't agree on what the issues are facing their school and community. It is also ok if they disagree on how to face these problems. The teacher's role is to facilitate this conversation, to model how to disagree, and support students who want to carry out a civic action project as well as those who may not.

It is also important to make space for students to share how they are feeling. Let students know that they are welcome to take a break or pass on sharing during any round.



Figure 1: Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning.
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[2A.2a.](#) Identify verbal, physical, and situational cues that indicate how others may feel.

[2B.2b.](#) Demonstrate how to interact positively with those who are different from oneself.



Culturally Responsive Teaching Tip **[Critical Step]**

During the circle, students may discuss difficult topics such as discrimination, police brutality and restrictive voting policies. Additionally they may discuss how poverty and certain policies negatively affect groups of people that they may identify with. However, this lesson challenges students with the hopeful reality that ordinary people, even students just like them, have always taken action against injustice in Rochester. Leaders such as Henry Padrón, Maria Lopez, Juan Padilla, and Don Samuel Torres and many others protested, marched, ran for office, voted, spoke out, and changed policies here in Rochester. We want students to recognize they have the power to create change in their community. They can build on the experiences and examples of those who have gone before them. This can be done deliberately by creating cultural context and connections as much as possible through current, past and personal stories. Be sure to emphasize that taking action is not only optional and up to them, but also looks different for each person. If they choose to take action, teachers and other trusted adults can be there to support them. Furthermore, students will likely have lots of ideas, and may need support planning.

Class Activity 1/3: Warm Up, Introduction

5 minutes

Teacher directions are directly connected to the slides in the slide deck.

Slide 4: Students will analyze the Learning Target for the Case Study. Teachers can guide this analysis by focusing on words and activities which are embedded in the Learning Target. Here is the Learning Target:



Learning Target: I can examine how activists fought against racist policy. I can identify strategies to fight for equity today.

Slide 5: Let students know that they will be participating in a circle about activism. Use the Fist-to-Five strategy to check in with them and see how they are feeling about this. You can quickly gauge a number of things—readiness, mood, comprehension—by asking students to use the “fist-to-five” signal with their hands.

Slide 6: Share the NYS Social Studies practice ‘Civic Participation’ with the students. Communicate that this is a Social Studies skill we will “PRACTICE” this year.

Slide 7: Remind students of the vocabulary term from day 3, ‘Antiracist’ (adj.) Ask them to turn and talk to a partner about ‘antiracist actions’ they learned about in the jigsaw activity. Teachers might draw student attention to current events to create cultural context and/or connection. Books, past historical figures, or other topics that have been studied in class are also ways to encourage student responses and thinking. Additionally, teachers may make connections to local events or young pioneers in the realm of activism and antiracism for more personal context.

Slides 8 - 9: Quickly review ‘racist’ (adj.) (**Slide 8**) and review or introduce “other words to consider” (**Slide 9**). Note that ‘ally’ is also included in the next slide.

Slide 10: For many students, taking civic action may mean becoming an ally. Father Laurence Tracy was an ally with the Puerto Rican community. For white students, this concept and identity may be one worth exploring and encouraging. Encourage students to have a brief partner conversation about allies they may know. Learn more from this Learning for Justice article “[Anatomy of an Ally](#)”.

Class Activity 2/3: Restorative Circle

Group Norms ‘Supported and Challenged’

Setup

Slide 11: Review or introduce students to the restorative circle protocol. If you have not already used a circle with your students (Case Study 1 used a circle), communicate that these group norms will be followed on this day and beyond. Model a group norm that you need in order to feel comfortable and safe during the circle. Then pass the talking piece around the circle.

Suggested Circle Protocol:

- Talking piece (only person allowed to talk is the one with the talking piece)
 - for virtual circles invite students to each come with a talking piece that represents safety and strength.
- Create agreed upon circle agreements or norms
- Facilitator goes first and then takes notes
- Create an order so kids know when they're speaking
- Facilitator summarizes what everyone said at the end

Teacher Notes:

It is helpful to use any norms previously created with your students. However, it is crucial to still give them the opportunity to make additions or adaptations.

Slide 12: Teachers have two options at this stage of instruction, though using both is also an option:

1. Show the video recording by Henry Padrón ([Video in Spanish](#) | [Video in English](#)) sharing in his own words, "A Story of Civic Action: A School Walkout." If there is time, students can react to the story and share their thoughts.
2. Hand out the text by Henry Padrón, "[A Story of Civic Action: A School Walkout.](#)"

This reading shares a personal story about civic action that can inspire and offer direction for students to consider how they can take informed action in their community.

Slide 13: Introduce the Round 1 question(s) and the facilitator begins by encouraging students to draw on their learning from Henry Padrón's story, Common Source, and Jigsaw Sources.

Round 1 Questions:

- **What challenges did the Latinx community face in Rochester?**
- **How did activists respond to the challenges happening in the Latinx community?**

Once the talking stick is passed encourage students to share their thoughts about the walkout story and how they connect to the vocabulary words. Then the talking stick is passed to the next student who has the option to share or pass. It is important that the facilitator offer affirmation to students by quickly reflecting back their comments without commenting on them. If a student shares something that breaks the group norms it is important to gently remind them of the group norms and give them another chance to share. After all the students have shared, the facilitator uses their notes to reflect back what the

students shared and highlight the themes and questions that emerged. If necessary the facilitator can make the decision to pass the talking piece back around the circle for a connection round where students can add to what they shared, ask questions, and answer one another's questions. This is not a time for the teacher to answer questions. The facilitator demonstrates a posture of curiosity, respect, seriousness, and intention.

Depending on timing, teachers may choose to ask only one of the two questions or pass on the connection round in order to ask both Round 1 questions.



Teaching Tip

While the students participate in the circle it may be helpful to make an **ANCHOR CHART** (set up similarly to the one below) that identifies injustices and activists responses. Possible answers are included [below in blue](#). Encourage students to examine Henry Padrón's Story, the jigsaw sources and common sources from the previous days. It may help to have those resources available for students to reference.

Injustice	Activists Response
Education	Roberto Burgos, Nancy Padilla, Henry Padrón organized a Bilingual Education program with school walkouts, sit-ins, and protests at school board meetings.
Voting	Maria Lopez sued for the right to vote. Edwin Rivera ran for office. Nancy Padilla ran for office.
Housing	Don Samuel Torres called out housing injustice and organized his community to elect Edwin Rivera.
Urban Renewal	Youth marched, held signs, did press conferences and protested the destruction of their neighborhood and church.

Slide 14: The question on this slide asks, "What do you notice about our community today?" This slide revisits the Mystery Sources (current data) from day 1 and provides two other recent headlines from the Greater Rochester community that suggest, despite effective activism and change over the years, there are still significant equity issues in our community today. The data and headlines point to the need for more activism and people who will lead change in our community so that everyone has equitable opportunities and access to equitable resources.

Slide 15: Introduce the Round 2 question...

‘What problem or issue in our school or community can we address using an anti-racist action strategy?’

Pass the talking piece and record students’ responses, questions and issues. The facilitator goes first again and models the circle protocol and group norms. After each student shares, the facilitator restates their answers noting and pulling out common themes and questions. After all the students have shared, the facilitator uses their notes to reflect back what the students shared and highlight the themes and questions that emerged. If necessary the facilitator can make the decision to pass the talking piece back around the circle for a connection round where students can add to what they shared, ask questions, and answer one another’s questions. Again, this is not a time for the teacher to answer questions. The facilitator demonstrates a posture of curiosity, respect, seriousness, and intention.



Teaching Tip

Consider helping students to redefine activism. It is likely that students will talk about problems they see in our world today and encourage that line of thinking. For a connection round ask students what they see as the biggest racial equity issues in their school and community today and possibly some solutions. Note quote in the last slide which can be helpful to spur on activism.

Class Activity 3/3: Check for Understanding

Slide 16: Return to the Learning Target and review the multiple parts of this target. This can also be done as part of the [Exit Ticket](#) discussion or to set up the Exit Ticket (see **Slide 18**). Here is the Learning Target that pulls together the focus of the Mystery Sources, Common Source, and Jigsaw Sources:



Learning Target: I can examine how activists fought against racist policy. I can identify strategies to fight for equity today.

Slide 17-18: As a way to encourage next steps and civic action, each student can complete the [Exit Ticket](#) which allows each student to brainstorm possible problems to address, action steps, and who they might work with in this adventure. Creating and encouraging active and engaged citizens is the work of Social Studies in general and antiracism in particular, so teachers can consider strategic next steps following the Exit Ticket. Post virtual or actual [giant] sticky notes with a complete list of all students’ proposed issues, possible allies, action steps and solutions. Create teams or partners and let students choose which issue they are most passionate about; this could be done in tandem with social studies and ELA curriculum. The scope of informed action in Social Studies does not need to be

overwhelming. Some civic action can be very small in scope and still quite effective. Activism options include but are not limited to:

- Pick an issue and meet in small groups to plan a protest. Discuss roles. Present it to the class and talk about how the group made decisions.
- Invite members of the community to speak about their experiences.
- Write a press release.
- Create a chant or make a sign.
- Write letters.

Slide 19: Close the lesson by checking in with how students are feeling. Have them hold up a finger to represent what zone they are in. Be sure to check in with students who identify as feeling in the blue or red zones.

Blue Zone 1 finger	Green Zone 2 fingers	Yellow Zone 3 fingers	Red Zone 4 fingers
Bored	Happy	Excited	Upset
Tired	Positive	Worried	Angry
Sad	Thankful	Nervous	Aggressive
Depressed	Proud	Confused	Mad
Shy	Calm	Embarrassed	Terrified