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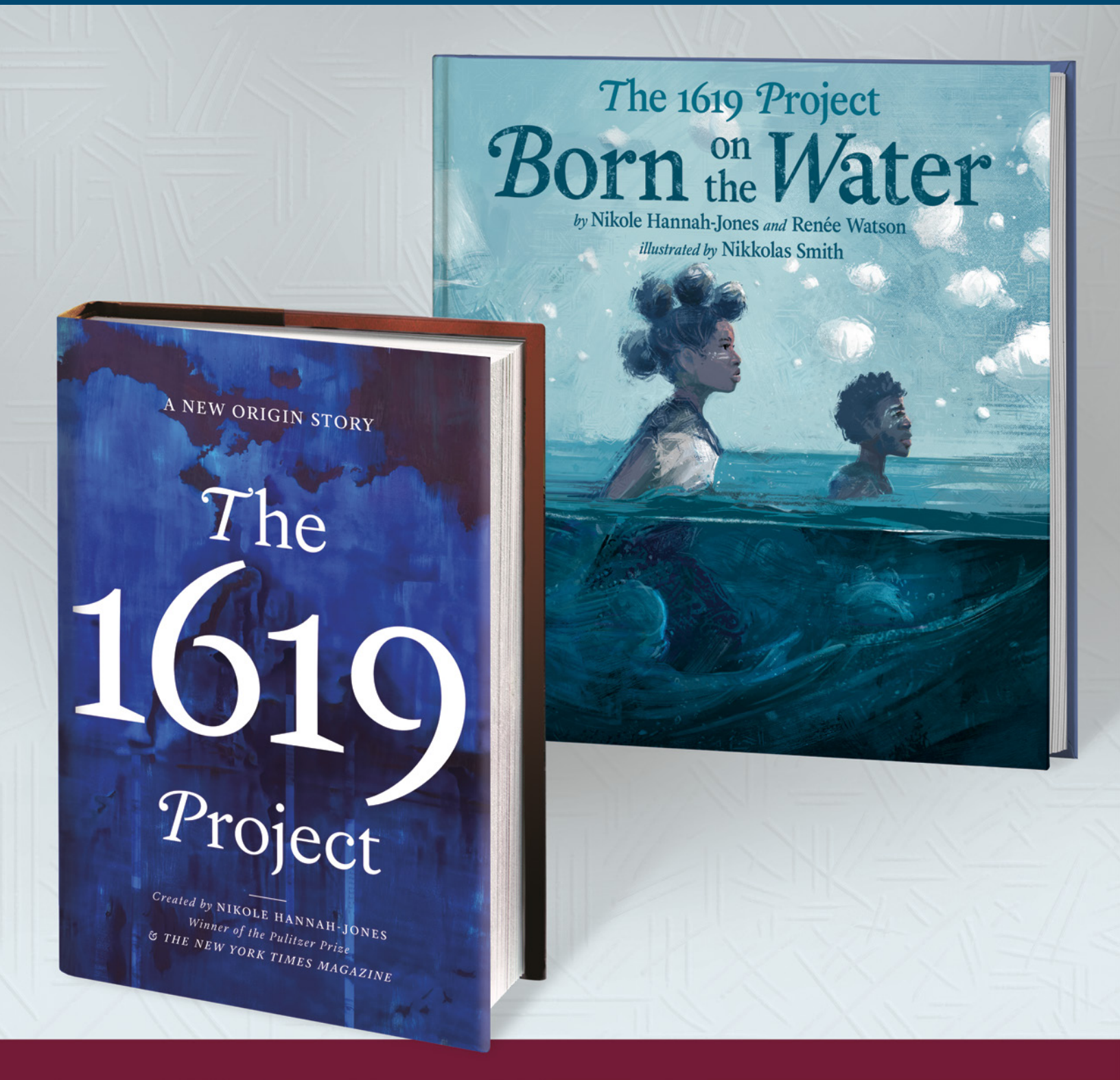
K-12 CURRICULUM GUIDE

The 1619 Project



Artwork from *The 1619 Project: Born on the Water* © 2021 The New York Times Company

The 1619 Project

K–12 Curriculum Guide

Guide Written by the Pulitzer Center

INTRODUCTION

What Is The 1619 Project?

The 1619 Project is an initiative from *The New York Times Magazine* that brings together academics, historians, artists, and journalists to reframe American history. Specifically, the project as a collective work asks that we center the influence and consequences of the institution of slavery on America's founding and acknowledge the contributions of Black Americans to the progress and development of the nation. The 1619 Project is a collaborative and expansive work consisting of the original *New York Times Magazine* special issue, the original print broadsheet, a podcast series, and two books from Penguin Random House—a dramatic expansion of the project's essays and creative works as well as a picture book for young readers. The project calls us to do the work of truth-telling as a baseline for collective healing, understanding, and growth. It serves as an impressive educational tool, allowing a variety of entry points into important and timely conversations about America's past, present, and future.

About the Pulitzer Center

The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting is a nonprofit journalism organization that raises awareness of underreported global issues through direct support for quality journalism across all media platforms and a unique program of education and public outreach. The education program specifically works to cultivate a more curious, informed, empathetic, and engaged public by connecting teachers and students with underreported global news stories and the journalists who cover them.

The Pulitzer Center is proud to be the education partner of The 1619 Project. They are committed to partnering with educators who want to utilize The 1619 Project in instruction, expanding their curriculum to include the often ignored contributions of Black Americans to our society and culture.

Why Teach The 1619 Project?

A common thread runs through the most popular frameworks for teaching and content standards today: recognition, supported by existing research, that students as 21st century learners need both critical thinking skills and cultural competency. A 2011 study by the National Education Association (tinyurl.com/ResearchNEA) found that ethnic studies curricula designed for diverse student groups benefited all students—students of color and white students—academically and socially. We are preparing students for a global society in which they will be asked to work across lines of difference and find creative, inclusive solutions to modern problems. Students who have a strong understanding of themselves and the world around them will be the best equipped to succeed.

Achieving that understanding of self and of society requires a fundamental knowledge about the ways in which our history impacts our community and culture today. Enter The 1619 Project.

The 1619 Project is not a complete history of the United States, but, rather, expands our collective understanding of the legacy of slavery in America and the contributions of Black Americans to the nation. The 1619 Project:

- Details the horrors and brutality of American chattel slavery
- Includes African American history and ancestry from before the first sale of enslaved Africans on American soil through the abolition of slavery decades later
- Utilizes print and multimedia formats, employing academic analysis, cultural criticism, and storytelling components
- Provides robust representation of Black voices, including noted Black historians, journalists, academics, and artists

There is much teaching and learning to be done if we are to help students understand the lasting impact of an institution that existed in America longer than it has been abolished, yet the scale of this impact has been traditionally excluded from classroom curricula. A 2018 survey of teachers by Teaching Hard History and the Southern Poverty Law Center (tinyurl.com/SPLCHardHistory). found that students were severely lacking in even the most basic understandings about American enslavement of Africans and that, while teachers are serious about teaching slavery and African American history, 58 percent of them found their textbooks inadequate and many felt ill-equipped to lead the conversation.

The 1619 Project provides educators with an invaluable resource for discussing these themes in the classroom. The 1619 Project enables teachers to:

- Help students understand what it means to share a national identity and a complex history
- Hold space in the classroom for a diversity of cultural backgrounds and lived experiences
- Cultivate understanding and empathy for the Black American experience
- Invite all students to reflect on their own cultural identities and build empathy for one another
- Empower students with conversations about hope, determination, education, and community

The wide readership, interest, and debates about this project demonstrate the need for more multicultural education for students, especially as the demographics of school-aged children continue to reflect a more diverse nation. Students may not agree with every argument made by the historians and other contributors to The 1619 Project, but they will have knowledge and reference points to form their own opinions and understandings. They will also gain a useful framework for sharing their own stories and community histories with the world.

A Note from the Pulitzer Center: What We've Learned About Successful Implementation of The 1619 Project

A lot of what we've learned in our work as an education partner for The 1619 Project won't come as a surprise to seasoned educators. Successful implementation of units and lessons incorporating The 1619 Project requires intentional planning, scaffolding of student learning, and a safe classroom environment for productive conversation. We've learned that there are numerous ways to approach teaching using The 1619 Project, including analyzing its content and arguments, examining the way the project is structured and utilizes multiple mediums, and even researching the criticism of and pushback against it. We've learned that this work can be done in a meaningful way with students of all ages and backgrounds.

Perhaps most importantly, we've learned that the work is most successful when there is a collective understanding and investment between teachers, administrators, and the school community. School districts and teams that identify elements of the project best aligned to their standards across grade levels have been extremely successful, as have those that plan cross-curricular units using the artistic elements of the project to help students further process and find meaning in different ways. Our hope is that this guide provides you with a point of reference to help build that understanding, as well as identify the elements of The 1619 Project best suited to your school and community context. Our goal is to establish a vision for how The 1619 Project might be taught and demonstrate why it is important and relevant for students of all ages.

About This Guide

This guide serves as a comprehensive overview of the two 1619 Project books, *Born on the Water* and *A New Origin Story*. It covers the major themes and key takeaways from each book and explains how they might be used together as well as in tandem with other elements of The 1619 Project to create meaningful learning for students at all grade levels. The artistic elements of the project lend themselves to the targeted social-emotional learning that is important for lower elementary students, developing their understanding of what it means to build care and empathy for others. Teachers of middle grade students studying the founding of the United States and its institutions will find a collection of meaningful historical facts and details often unrepresented in social studies curricula. High school students will be able to further develop their critical thinking and analysis skills as they consider America's place in the larger global society, how American society and culture today is influenced by the nation's history, and how to use multiple perspectives to create informed opinions about the world around them.

The 1619 Project: Born on the Water is a picture book written in lyrical verse that provides a pathway for readers of all ages to reflect on the origins of American identity by chronicling the consequences of slavery and the history of Black resistance in the United States.

The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story is a dramatic expansion of the groundbreaking journalism in *The New York Times Magazine*'s "1619 Project" issue. This book substantially expands on the original project, weaving together 19 essays and 36 creative works that illuminate key moments of origin, oppression, struggle, and resistance.

The guide to *Born on the Water* includes notes, key terms, and a high-level summary of the text as a whole, as well as a guide to chunking the text, teaching in sections, and scaffolding student understanding.

The guide to *A New Origin Story* works similarly, providing summaries, key themes, and notes for each essay in the book and each creative work on the literary timeline. Though the entire project deals with the harsh realities of slavery and its legacy, including racism and anti-Blackness, in some chapters we have included additional sensitivity notes for descriptions of violence and assault or other potentially triggering language, like the use of racial slurs. We anticipate that these notes will assist you in planning which tools to provide students to help them process big emotions, should they arise. Deep breathing, the opportunity to journal before speaking, and quiet fidget toys are a few examples we've seen be successful. You could also work with a school guidance counselor to ensure students have access to resources if a sensitive or traumatic experience surfaces. The choice to share these sensitivity notes with students prior to engaging with material is up to each teacher, though we do believe there can be benefits as outlined in this short Learning for Justice article, "Why I Support Trigger Warnings" (tinyurl.com/WhyISupportTriggerWarnings). The most important thing is that students feel safe and equipped to engage in these critical and meaningful conversations.

Using The 1619 Project Cohesively

The 1619 Project is rich in resources. They all share in amplifying the project themes and can have the strongest impact when used in tandem with one another. We hope that this section helps to clarify how all aspects of the project might be utilized in your teaching and learning goals.

"The 1619 Project" *New York Times Magazine* Publication

Though *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* is a dramatic expansion of the original *New York Times Magazine* publication of "The 1619 Project," the original publication is still available with a lot to offer. Accompanying the writing are:

- Original photo essays
- A broadsheet with primary source documents and artifacts curated by Mary Elliott, curator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (tinyurl.com/1619Broadsheet)
- A K–8 infographic about the lasting impact of slavery in the United States (tinyurl.com/K8Infographic)

Teaching Tip: Classrooms studying journalism, writing, and media can talk about what it means for journalists and scholars to review and update their work by comparing essays in the original publication with their expansions in *A New Origin Story*. They can also investigate how *Born on the Water* synthesizes the facts, events, and themes laid out clearly in this publication and weaves them together in a narrative form for younger audiences.

Interact with the original "1619 Project" in a dynamic way on the New York Times Magazine website (tinyurl.com/1619NYTMagazine) or read through the full PDF of the publication (tinyurl.com/1619PDF) with resources for instruction on the Pulitzer Center website (www.1619education.org).

1619 Podcast

1619, the podcast, is a five-episode series that expands on major themes from the 1619 Project. Some episodes align directly with essays included in the project and feature the essays' authors as guest speakers. The two-part fifth episode is not built from one essay in the project but ties directly to the themes throughout. It also pairs well with essays from *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* like "Race," "Dispossession," and "Inheritance."

Teaching Tip: The podcast format allows for historical facts and events to be shared alongside personal anecdotes from the podcast narrators and contributors, as well as several sources of primary source audio from historical archives. These resources make the episodes a great tool for scaffolding conversations for students and a strong resource to pair with *Born on the Water*, which uses a similar narrative approach. Students can explore podcasting as a tool for teaching and learning and practice developing speaking and listening skills that allow them to share their own stories.

Listen to *1619* on the *New York Times Magazine* website (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast) and explore student listening guides for instruction on the Pulitzer Center website (tinyurl.com/1619PodcastGuide).

The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story

The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story expands on the original magazine publication in a substantial way. Each essay provides a scholarly approach to its major topic or theme and includes primary sources and references that can help students understand the nature of historiography and how scholars draw different conclusions and opinions while studying the same events and primary sources.

The impressive collection of creative works form a literary timeline that allows students to process themes in a different way and exposes them to an anthology of modern Black artists and writers. *A New Origin Story* shows students how critical thinking and historical research are necessary to fully understand the society around them, no matter what their future goals and interests may be.

Planning Tip: Consider introducing the preface of *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* to educators as a source for evaluating the core themes and compelling questions explored by all of the essays and creative works. After reviewing the preface to analyze the book's core themes, educators are encouraged to utilize the curriculum guide below, or the table of contents in the book, to identify essays and creative works that support their content standards and/or engage themes that will engage students and support district goals. For a closer look at the core themes and compelling questions explored throughout The 1619 Project materials, educators can also start by listening to Episode 1: "The Fight for a True Democracy" of the *1619* podcast or reviewing *Born on the Water*.

Teaching Tip: The essays and creative works model an abundance of writing strategies that students can use to practice their literacy skills. Students can engage with these texts to evaluate how authors:

- Structure nonfiction texts to support key claims
- Organize details from multiple sources to support main ideas and explore compelling questions
- Apply literary strategies to shape meaning and tone and communicate a point of view or purpose

The 1619 Project: Born on the Water

Born on the Water grounds the themes and goals of The 1619 Project in the lived experiences of Black Americans. The narrative begins with a story that mirrors the one Nikole Hannah-Jones tells at the end of her essay, "Democracy," in *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*. The story follows a young Black student unsure of how to complete a class project that asks students to share their ancestry. Through this entry point, the book engages with the reality of how Black Americans' history, culture, and contributions to society have been overlooked and undervalued, while also providing a story of origins and ancestry for Black Americans.

Teaching Tip: The structure—independent verses woven together—provides a useful tool for chunking the text and exploring themes with focus and intent. Each section of the book, as we divided them in this guide, aligns well with different essays, podcast episodes, and other elements of the project.

Planning Tip: *Born on the Water* is equally useful as a tool for pre-work to support engagement with other texts from the project and for building enduring understanding after exploring other elements of the project.

Teaching Tip: The illustrations support the text while telling a beautiful visual story of their own, and students can study them alongside the photographs included in *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* and the photo essays from the original publication.

Born on the Water is an origin story in its own right and provides a model for sharing family, community, and historical narratives that will be accessible and memorable for all students.

Guide to

The 1619 Project: Born on the Water

By Nikole Hannah-Jones and Renée Watson;
Illustrated by Nikkolas Smith

Summary	When a young Black girl struggles to complete a school assignment that asks her to locate her ancestral home on a map, her grandmother tells her the story of their family's ancestral origin by starting in West Central Africa. The grandmother recounts their ancestors' culturally rich community in the Kingdom of Ndongo, the enslavement of those ancestors by slave traders, their treacherous journey across the Atlantic, and their arrival in Point Comfort, Virginia, in 1619—an arrival that marked the beginning of slavery in the colonies that would become the United States. She describes the hardships their ancestors endured and how they survived and resisted over the next 250 years by remembering their homes, building and celebrating a Black American culture, creating and innovating in ways that transformed society, and continuing to hope for their futures. "Never forget you came from people of great strength," Grandma says. "Be proud of our story, your story." In *Born on the Water*, Hannah-Jones, Watson, and Smith capture the resistant and triumphant spirit of enslaved Africans and Black Americans while chronicling the history and legacy of slavery in the United States. The text and illustrations, which are broken into 15 chapters that are each two to three pages, can be used to engage students in discussions about their own cultures, traditions, community, and ancestry, and to encourage them to cultivate curiosity about the cultures of others.
Chapters	1. Questions 2. What Grandma Tells Me 3. They Had a Language 4. Their Hands Had a Knowing 5. And They Danced 6. Stolen 7. The *White Lion* 8. Point Comfort 9. Tobacco Fields 10. How to Make a Home 11. The Tuckers of Tidewater, Virginia 12. William Tucker 13. Resist 14. Legacy 15. Pride

Section	Chapters and Key Quote	Key Vocabulary	Themes
Introduction (pp. 1-9) The story opens as a young Black girl struggles to answer the following questions as part of a school assignment: 1. Who are you? 2. Can you trace your roots? When her grandmother hears about the assignment, and the shame the young girl felt, she sits the family down to share the story of their family's ancestors.	**Chapters** • **Questions** • **What Grandma Tells Me** **Quotes** "I do not know where I begin, what my story is." "They say our people were born on the water, but our people had a home, a place, a land before they were sold."	**Vocab** Roots Ancestor Ancestral Land Generations Ashamed	**Themes** Ancestry Identity Cultural Memory Enslavement Home
Remembering Ndongo (pp. 10–19) The grandmother explains that the young girl can trace her cultural ancestry to the first enslaved Africans on American soil and beyond that to the Kingdom of Ndongo in West Central Africa. The grandmother then goes on to describe the culture, language, values, and the early history of the communities in Ndongo.	**Chapters** • **They Had a Language** • **Their Hands Had a Knowing** • **And They Danced** **Quotes** "They spoke Kimbundu, had their own words for love, for friend, for family." "Their hands had a knowing . . . their hearts had a knowing . . . their minds had a knowing, worldly, curious, and sharp."	**Vocab** Worldly Ancient Portuguese Marimbas Mourn Testament **Historical terms** 1619 *Mayflower* Kimbundu Kingdom of Ndongo	**Themes** Elements of Culture Cultural Tradition Community Ways of Knowing/ Intelligence
The Middle Passage (pp. 20–31) The grandmother tells the story of a ship called the *White Lion*, which arrived on the shores of Point Comfort, Virginia, in 1619, carrying Africans who had been captured and forced to leave Ndongo by Portuguese slave traders. She describes the treacherous journey across the Atlantic Ocean and how this arrival also marked the beginning of slavery in the land that would become the United States and the birth of a new African American identity.	**Chapters** • **Stolen** • **The *White Lion*** • **Point Comfort** **Quote** "Packed in dark misery, strangers chained together head to feet, hip to hip, in the bottom of a ship called the *White Lion*, they saw that these strangers, men, women, children, kidnapped, too, from many villages—these were their people now."	**Vocab** Baptized Immigration Cherished Bloodlines **Historical Terms** New World Kwanza River The Transatlantic Slave Trade The *White Lion* Point Comfort	**Themes** Forced Migration Grief and Loss Forced Assimilation Cultural Erasure Remembrance as Resistance

Section	Chapters and Key Quote	Key Vocabulary	Themes
Slavery in America (pp. 32–37) The narrator describes the hardships her ancestors endured on plantations and the ways they found solace and strength by passing on memory and knowledge, and by cultivating community and hope for the future.	**Chapters** • **Tobacco Fields** • **How to Make a Home** • **The Tuckers of Tidewater, Virginia** **Quote** "We are in a strange land, they said. But we are here and we will make this home. We have determination, imaginations, and faith. We will survive because we have each other."	**Vocab** Tobacco Harvesting Labor Legacy Weary Wealth **Locations** Europe Virginia	**Themes** Slavery Memory and Preserving Knowledge Community Hope Resilience
Resistance, Resilience, and Hope (pp. 38–43) Opening with the birth of William Tucker, "a child of the new people formed on the water," these chapters describe how enslaved Africans and their descendants survived and resisted over the next 250 years. The chapters explain that the legacy of African American survival and prosperity upholds the promise of American democracy and equality for all Americans before the law.	**Chapters** • **William Tucker** • **Resist** • **Legacy** **Quote** "And because the people survived and because the people fought, America began to live up to its promise of democracy."	**Vocab** Legacy Ordinary Refusal Hope Resist Resistance Illegal **Key Terms** Equality Democracy	**Themes** Resistance Innovation by Black Americans Throughout History Legacy Democracy
Pride (p. 44) In the conclusion of the story, the young Black girl is reminded of the strength and spirit of her ancestry. Proudly, she both claims and celebrates her identity as a Black American.	**Chapters** • **Pride** **Quote** "The next day, I go to school, pull out my red crayon, my blue, and white. I draw the stars and I draw the stripes of the flag of the country that my ancestors built, that my grandma and grandpa built, that I will help build too."	**Vocab** Black Lives Matter Black Girl Magic	**Themes** Black American Identity Black Lives Matter Pride

Guide to the Essays

Preface: "Origins" by Nikole Hannah-Jones New York Times Magazine *Staff Writer and Journalism Professor*	pp. xvii–xxxiii

Summary and High-Level Themes

The primary author of The 1619 Project relates her experience as a student who came to realize that her understanding of U.S. history was marked by limited facts and an incomplete story of origin. Decades later, her deepening awareness of the erasure of the story of Black Americans in the history of the country, and her perspective as a journalist reporting on contemporary society, gave her the idea to create The 1619 Project. In bringing together journalists, historians, poets, photographers, and museum curators to produce a special issue of *The New York Times Magazine*, the author explains how she hoped to reframe U.S. history to center the experience of Black Americans, present the year 1619 as a foundational date, and interpret key social issues in contemporary society through their links to slavery.

The preface also explains the ways in which this book builds on the initial special magazine issue and responds directly to some of the criticism and backlash while clarifying again the necessity of this work.

High-level themes in the Preface include historiography, power, and the roles of education and journalism.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Origin Story**
- **Reframing**
- **Legacy**
- **Middle Passage**
- ***White Lion***

Notable Names

- ***White Lion***
- **Frederick Douglass**
- **Harriet Tubman**
- ***The New York Times***

Historical Context

The preface was written two years after "The 1619 Project" issue of *The New York Times Magazine* was published. It offers additional personal context from Nikole Hannah-Jones, the principal author of the project, and provides reflections on the reception and impact of the project in the years since publication.

Read Together with . . .

"The White Lion" by Claudia Rankine

Born on the Water by Nikole Hannah-Jones and Renée Watson; Illustrated by Nikkolas Smith

K-8 Infographic Resource by Erica L. Green, Annette Gordon-Reed, and Lovia Gyarkye for The New York Times Magazine (tinyurl.com/K8Infographic)

Chapter 1: "Democracy" by Nikole Hannah-Jones New York Times Magazine *Staff Writer and Journalism Professor*	pp. 7–36

Summary and High-Level Themes

This essay begins with a deep dive into America's founding and revolutionary period, documenting how protecting the institution of slavery was an often ignored motivation for rebellion. It then continues to chronicle the critical role that Black Americans played in shaping American democracy throughout the nation's history. Hannah-Jones argues that Black Americans have been the perfectors of democracy and demonstrates the ways in which Black Americans' struggle for freedom and equality has helped to benefit all Americans.

High-level themes in Chapter 1 include democracy, political movements, identity, and citizenship.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Middle Passage**
- **Chattel Slavery**
- **Abolition**
- **Congress**
- **Racial Caste System**
- **Racial Apartheid**

Historical Movements and Periods

- **American Revolution**
- **Haitian Revolution**
- **American Colonization Society**
- **13th Amendment**
- **Reconstruction Period**
- **Civil Rights Period**

Historical Context

"Democracy" analyzes the hypocrisies that existed in our laws and societal structure at the nation's founding and Black Americans' role in shaping our democracy and helping America live up to its ideals.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes graphic descriptions of physical violence against Black Americans, specifically in the sections that discuss life after Reconstruction, and includes a through line about the development of whiteness as an identity and white supremacist ideologies that dehumanize Black people.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 7: "Politics" by Jamelle Bouie

"First to Rise" by Yusef Komunyakaa

"Like to the Rushing of a Mighty Wind" by Tracy K. Smith

"Quotidian" by Natasha Trethewey

Born on the Water by Nikole Hannah-Jones and Renée Watson; Illustrated by Nikkolas Smith

1619 podcast, "Episode 1: "The Fight for a True Democracy" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 2: "Race" by Dorothy Roberts *Professor of Law, Sociology, and Africana Studies*	pp. 46–61

Summary and High-Level Themes

This analytical essay explores the history of racial classification in America, examining the need to both justify slavery and maintain white supremacy. Through a complex system of laws, policies, publications, programs, and myths, the American government, at both the national and local levels, has monitored and maintained a rigid racial hierarchy that permeates through contemporary society. The essay also centers the exploitation and degradation of Black women throughout American history as a crucial component to privileging white men and disempowering Black communities.

High-level themes in Chapter 2 include institutionalized racism, misogynoir, and reproductive justice.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- Eugenics
- Statutory
- Mulatto
- Miscegenation
- Licentious
- Genome

Important Terms

- Partus Sequitur Ventrem
- The New Deal
- Involuntary Sterilization
- Family Planning Programs

Legislation

1. Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment
2. Racial Integrity Act of 1924
3. *Loving v. Virginia* (1967)
4. Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment
5. Criminal Law of 1691 in Virginia
6. Crime Act of 1968

Historical Context

The essay explores the development of both racial hierarchies as well as beliefs about sex, morality, and power from pre-colonial America to the 1980s. The author spends a large portion of the essay exploring the issue in the context of early colonial history and the second half of the 20th century. Some background on colonial history, especially slavery, and contemporary racial issues would be helpful.

Sensitivity Notes

The essay describes sexual violence against Black women and girls.

Read Together with . . .

"Daughters of Azimuth" by Nikky Finney

Chapter 4: "Fear" by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander

Chapter 5: "Dispossession" by Tiya Miles

Chapter 3: "Sugar" by Khalil Gibran Muhammad *Professor of History, Race, and Public Policy*	pp. 71–87

Summary and High-Level Themes

This analytical essay's primary claim is that the global demand and cultivation of sugar was central to the establishment and continuation of the international slave trade. The essay outlines how North American colonies participated in the sugar trade, in part, by importing molasses for the production of rum, which was used to trade enslaved Africans, and producing sugarcane in Louisiana.

High-level themes in Chapter 3 include the cruelty of the international slave trade, collective resistance to enslavement, and systemic oppression of Black people.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Recalcitrance**
- **Sharecropping**
- **Reconstruction**
- **Triangular Trade**
- **Royal African Company**
- **The Haitian Revolution**

Locations

- **Bight of Benin**
- **Bight of Biafra**
- **Cape Coast Castle**
- **Senegambia**
- **New Guinea**

Historical Context

"Sugar" discusses the beginnings of the international slave trade—giving a global context to existing knowledge of slavery in the United States. Prior to reading, students might discuss colonization and the establishment of sugar islands outside the North American colonies. The essay also discusses the Haitian Revolution as a driver for the production of sugar in the United States.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes multiple graphic descriptions, including the kidnapping of humans for enslavement, bodily harm caused by conditions on the Middle Passage, sexual violence, and suicide. Profanity appears in the text within quotations. The essay discusses the impact of sugar on the health of Black Americans, utilizing words like "obesity."

Read Together with . . .

"Conjured" by Honorée Fanonne Jeffers

Chapter 6: "Capitalism" by Matthew Desmond

1619 podcast, Episode 5: "The Land of Our Fathers" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 4: "Fear" by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander *Leslie Alexander, Professor of History and African-American Studies;* *Michelle Alexander, Civil Rights Lawyer, Legal Scholar, and Author*	pp. 97–122

Summary and High-Level Themes

"Fear" is an analytical essay that starts and ends in 2020, with descriptions of global protests in response to violence against Black Americans. The body of the essay explores the cycle of policies, policing practices, and organized violence over the last three centuries in response to a perpetual fear of Black people, Black protest, and Black rebellion. The text cites several primary source documents throughout the analysis and, touching on the diversity of the 2020 protest movements, closes with the argument, "Perhaps our nation is finally beginning to face our history, as a new generation of activists challenges us to choose a radically different path forward. The future of Black communities, and our democracy as a whole, depends on us finally getting it right this time."

High-level themes in Chapter 4 include oppressive laws and policies, the history of policing, and the history of Black resistance to violence.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- Cash Crop
- Mass Incarceration
- Slave Patrols
- Freedmen's Bureau
- COINTELPRO
- NAACP

Historical Events

- Slave Revolution of 1712
- 1739 Stono Rebellion
- Haitian Revolution
- German Coast Rebellion of 1811
- East St. Louis Riots
- 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre
- Holy Week Uprising of 1968

Historical Context

The essay opens with a description of the global protests in 2020 that followed the murder of George Floyd and outlines how the protests connect to centuries of resistance and rebellion by Black people against enslavement, as well as the policies and policing practices aimed at criminalizing Black communities since the abolishment of slavery over 150 years ago.

Sensitivity Notes

The essay describes extreme violence against Black people, including rape and lynching.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 2: "Race" by Dorothy Roberts

Chapter 7: "Politics" by Jamelle Bouie

"Freedom Is Not for Myself Alone" by Robert Jones, Jr.

The 1619 Project Print Broadsheet from *The New York Times* (tinyurl.com/1619Broadsheet)

Chapter 5: "Dispossession" by Tiya Miles *Professor of History*	pp. 135–155

Summary and High-Level Themes

This analytical essay examines the history of subordination, erasure, and expulsion of Native nations. The essay also highlights the enforcement of a racial distinction between Native Americans and Black people, a difference that continues to impact Native and Black relations today.

High-level themes in Chapter 5 include dispossession, sovereignty, racial hierarchy, and Black-Indigenous solidarity.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Assimilation**
- **Civilization Program**
- **Comprehensive Cultural Change**
- **Racial Education**
- **Descendants of Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes Association**

Historical Terms

- **The Treaty of Hopewell**
- **Anglo-Cherokee War**
- **Indian Removal Act**
- **Treaty of New Echota in 1835**
- **Trail of Tears**
- **Three-Fifths Clause**

Historical Context

The essay explores American history from the arrival of European explorers in the 1500s to the shared challenges Black and Indigenous communities are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The author spends a large portion of the essay exploring early colonial history and Andrew Jackson's presidency. Some background on European explorers in America and early colonial history would be helpful.

Sensitivity Notes

This essay discusses themes of forced relocation, people as property, family separation, and eradication of culture and language may be challenging for students without preparation and an establishment of a safe space for students to reflect.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 2: "Race" by Dorothy Roberts

"Fort Mose" by Tyehimba Jess

Chapter 6: "Capitalism" by Matthew Desmond *Professor of Sociology*	pp. 165–185

Summary and High-Level Themes

Synthesizing research by historians and sociologists such as W.E.B. Du Bois, "Capitalism" outlines how slavery shaped the development of U.S. political institutions; laws governing private property, taxation, and financial regulation; and management techniques, labor unions, and workers' rights. The essay argues that these systems' foundation in slavery explains the U.S.'s particularly brutal version of capitalism, characterized by extreme inequality and sweeping deregulation.

High-level themes for Chapter 6 include economic disparity, the U.S. taxation system, and the application of legal and civil rights to businesses.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Import Tax / Tariff**
- **Income Tax / Progressive Taxation**
- **Private Property**
- **Laissez-faire**
- **Cotton Gin**

Historical Events

- **Constitutional Convention**
- **The Great Compromise**
- **Internal Revenue Service**
- **14th Amendment**
- **American Labor Movement**

Historical Context

"Capitalism" discusses how slavery shaped the U.S. government and economic systems. Students should have a firm understanding of the three branches of government and how they interact, as well as a background in economic concepts and terminology such as taxation, speculation, lending, and recession. The essay recounts the development of these systems against the backdrop of the Revolutionary War, Industrial Revolution, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Familiarity with these periods will be helpful.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes descriptions of violent punishments inflicted on enslaved people.

Read Together with . . .

"Sold South" by Jesmyn Ward

Chapter 5: "Dispossession" by Tiya Miles

1619 podcast, Episode 2: "The Economy That Slavery Built" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 7: "Politics" by Jamelle Bouie *Journalist, Writer, and Political Analyst*	pp. 196–208

Summary and High-Level Themes

This essay centers on politics and power, highlighting the link between slavery and the disenfranchisement of Black voters today. Bouie argues that an acting minority (conservative whites in government) that limits democracy out of self-preservation can be traced back to the pro-slavery case made pre-Civil War. It is an ideological origin story of power and belonging within national-political identity. Sources include historians and political scientists, as well as quotes from organizations like the ACLU and former politicians.

This essay focuses on the ideology of those in power, as opposed to the active role that Black people and marginalized groups played in mobilization and/or resistance. This essay contextualize why voter suppression can still exist within American democracy, but the creative works complementing the essay will also show what Black people have done to combat it or assert their rights as active agents.

High-level themes in Chapter 7 include voter suppression, democracy, the right to citizenship (and voting as a right or reward), national identity, and the majority versus minority.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Disenfranchise**
- **Nullify**
- **Tariff**
- **Veto**
- **Filibuster**
- **Egregious**

Political Terms

- **Voter Suppression**
- **Minority Rule**
- **Three-Fifths Clause (Article I)**
- **Dispossession**
- **Gerrymander**

Ideologies and Movements

- **"Stop the Steal"**
- **Trumpism**
- **"Birther" Conspiracy**
- **Political Abolition**
- **Democratic Legitimacy**
- **Nullification**

Historical Context

The essay begins and ends with the 2020 presidential election but also details pro-slavery arguments and waning Southern influence leading up to the Civil War (1820–1850). This has some references to the purpose of government in the Revolutionary War era. The essay briefly touches on moments in the mid-20th century (ex. *Brown v. Board*, Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act) to show through lines in conservative ideology, but dedicates more time to a critique of contemporary Republicanism in the Obama era (2008–2016).

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes era-specific language around white people as the "most advanced and civilized" race.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 4: "Fear" by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander

Chapter 15: "Healthcare" by Jeneen Interlandi

"An Absolute Massacre" by ZZ Packer

"Race Riot" by Forrest Hamer

Chapter 8: "Citizenship" by Martha S. Jones *Professor of History*	pp. 219–236

Summary and High-Level Themes

This essay outlines the struggle to achieve citizenship, documenting how Black activists played a foundational role in establishing birthright citizenship in the U.S. as a standard today. Despite the contradictions, ambivalence, and ambiguity of America's founding principles and legislation regarding the citizenship status of Black Americans, 19th-century Black activists mobilized to promote "liberty and justice" for all, including paving the way for other marginalized groups of color.

High-level themes in Chapter 8 include full citizenship, belonging, Black self-defense and advocacy, voting and gender, and equality.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- Naturalization
- Birthright Citizenship
- Federalism
- Dissension
- Emigrationist
- Veto

Historical Terms and Events

- National Convention of the Colored Men of America
- Naturalization Act of 1790
- Missouri Compromise
- The American Colonization Society (ACS)
- Fugitive Slave Act
- Civil Rights Act of 1866

Historical Context

This essay makes strong references to founding documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution throughout, to highlight debates in rhetoric and interpretation. With a focus on 1776–1893, Jones provides other examples of legal cases that highlight inconsistencies in the definition of American citizenship. The essay also reveals how over time citizenship evolved into a key issue at the National Convention of the Colored Men of America, and among Black activists and abolitionists more broadly.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes era-specific, outdated language, including "Negro" and "mulatto."

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 1: "Democracy" by Nikole Hannah-Jones

"A Letter to Harriet Hayden" by Lynn Nottage

"Like to the Rushing of a Mighty Wind" by Tracy K. Smith

Chapter 9: "Self-Defense" by Carol Anderson *Historian, Author, and Professor of African-American Studies*	pp. 249–266

Summary and High-Level Themes

This essay outlines how the right to self-defense evolved along racial lines. Anderson argues that the laws of self-defense, dating back to the Second Amendment and resistance to arming enslaved people, assured white people they could protect themselves from Black people, whom they often perceived as "dangerous" or "suspicious." With this association persisting today, Black Americans cannot equally claim the right to self-defense that is "so quintessential to American identity," thus further emphasizing an unspoken exclusion from full American citizenship and protection.

High-level themes in Chapter 9 include racialized perceptions of a threat, gun control, unequal application of law, public safety and policing, and the "natural right" of self-defense.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Buttress**
- **Fulminate**
- **Phalanx**
- **Treason**
- **Repudiation**

Political and Historical Terms

- **Stand Your Ground Law**
- **Second Amendment**
- **"Castle Doctrine"**
- **Black Codes**
- **Jim Crow**
- **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP)**

Historical Context

The essay links modern self-defense cases of the 21st century back to pro-slavery arguments in the 18th and 19th centuries against allowing Black people to bear arms, for fear of uprising. Like other chapters, it references fractured regional needs (pro-slavery) upon the nation's founding. For example, the Second Amendment in 1791 allowed Federalists to win the well-regulated militia they wanted, while appeasing the South with the understanding the militia could act "'as a slave control device.'"

Sensitivity Notes

Essay involves usage of the N-word; graphic depictions of anti-Black violence, sexual violence, and white domestic terrorism in the post-Civil War South and throughout the country in the 20th century as well as modern-day gun violence and shootings of Black people.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 4: "Fear" by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander

Chapter 13: "Church" by Anthea Butler

"The Panther Is a Virtual Animal" by Joshua Bennett

"A Surname to Honor Their Mother" by Gregory Pardlo

Chapter 10: "Punishment" by Bryan Stevenson *Lawyer, Professor, and Founder of the Equal Justice Initiative*	pp. 276–283

Summary and High-Level Themes

"Punishment" argues that the history of slavery explains the excessively punitive and often brutal nature of the criminal legal system in the U.S., and this system's disproportionate impact on Black Americans.

High-level themes in Chapter 10 include criminalization of Black Americans, presumption of guilt, and use of law and order to maintain racial hierarchy.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Carceral System**
- **Criminalization**
- **Extralegal**
- **Parole**
- **Punitive**

Historical Terms

- **Mass Incarceration**
- **13th Amendment**
- **Convict Leasing**
- **Lynching**
- **Black Codes**

Historical Context

"Punishment" mentions the "war on drugs, mandatory minimum sentences, three-strikes laws, children tried as adults," and "'broken windows' policing" as examples of contemporary manifestations of the Black Codes; knowledge of these phenomena is assumed.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay describes brutal physical punishments inflicted on enslaved people and lynchings.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 2: "Race" by Dorothy Roberts

Chapter 6: "Capitalism" by Matthew Desmond

"Before His Execution" by Tim Seibles

"A Surname to Honor Their Mother" by Gregory Pardlo

Chapter 11: "Inheritance" by Trymaine Lee *Journalist and Correspondent for MSNBC*	pp. 293–310

Summary and High-Level Themes

This narrative essay frames the conflict between Black prosperity and white supremacy with the violent murder of a Black entrepreneur in the 1940s. Lee examines how the American government first established full citizenship to Black Americans and then dismantled systems designed to support the growth of Black communities in order to restore white privilege.

High-level themes in Chapter 11 include property rights, generational trauma, white supremacy, and equal protection under the law.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- Inheritance
- Emancipation
- Sharecroppers
- Speculative Loan
- Social Codes
- Coup

Political and Historical Terms

- The Freedmen's Bureau
- Forty Acres and a Mule
- Tulsa Race Massacre
- Reconstruction Amendments
- The Compromise of 1877
- Jim Crow Laws

Historical Context

The essay explores American history post-slavery, focusing on Reconstruction and Redemption. Some additional background on Jim Crow laws would be helpful.

Sensitivity Notes

This essay details a series of violent assaults, some resulting in murder.

Read Together with . . .

"Greenwood" by Jasmine Mans

1619 podcast, Episode 5: "The Land of Our Fathers" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 12: "Medicine" by Linda Villarosa *Journalist, Educator, and Contributing Writer for* The New York Times Magazine	pp. 315–323

Summary and High-Level Themes

This analytical essay explores the legacy of slavery in the U.S. health care system and the various ways in which it manifests in our contemporary health care institutions and practices. The primary claim made in this essay is that the racist ideas regarding Black people's bodies formulated and spread by medical practitioners during slavery continue to affect Black people's health. The author supports this claim by citing several examples of these false ideas in scientific literature authored by respected medical practitioners at the time. This essay also highlights how these false ideas regarding Black bodies continue to inform current medical education and practices, resulting in the health care inequality experienced by Black Americans today.

High-level themes in Chapter 12 include health, institutionalized/medical racism, medical neglect, and racist myths/fallacies.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- Racial Disparities
- Theory (Scientific/Medical)
- Fallacies
- Complicity
- Unconscious Bias
- Internalized Racism

Historical Documents

- *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; and on the Climate of the West-Indies* by Benjamin Moseley
- *Notes on the State of Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson
- *The Story of My Life* by J. Marion Sims

Historical Context

This essay explores false ideas and theories about Black bodies introduced during the time of slavery in the United States and passed down for years thereafter. Additionally, the essay recounts abuse experienced by Black people in the form of medical experimentation beginning during the time of their enslavement in the U.S. and lasting until the late 20th century. Prior knowledge on the time period and the history of slavery in the U.S. would be helpful.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay includes descriptions of medical experimentation and abuse undergone by Black people. Mention of racist theories and ideas that claimed Black people were inferior to white people in order to support the enslavement and mistreatment of Black people.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 15: "Healthcare" by Jeneen Interlandi

"Bad Blood" by Yaa Gyasi

1619 podcast, Episode 4: "How the Bad Blood Started" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 13: "Church" by Anthea Butler *Professor of Religious Studies and Africana Studies*	pp. 335–353

Summary and High-Level Themes

Butler's essay explores the establishment and growth of Black churches in the U.S., the role of churches in Black communities throughout U.S. history as centers for education and political organizing, and tensions Black religious leaders have faced when navigating differing approaches to social justice movements. The essay also examines the ways that slave owners used religion to justify enslavement and deny education to enslaved people, and why Black churches and religious figures throughout history have been targets of racist policies and violence by white supremacist groups.

High-level themes in Chapter 13 include the history of political organizing, education and advocacy in Black churches, and the violence that has threatened Black churches and church communities as a result.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Black Liberation Theology**
- **Chattel Slavery**
- **Segregation**
- **Reconstruction**
- **Ku Klux Klan**
- **Emancipation**

Historical Terms and Movements

- **The First Great Awakening of the 1730s**
- **Back to Africa Movement**
- **Albany Movement**
- **1961 Freedom Rides**
- **Liberation Theology**

Historical Context

This essay starts with the pushback Barack Obama faced during his 2008 presidential campaign due to a statement made by the reverend at his church and closes with the historic election by Reverend Raphael Warnock to the senate in 2020. In outlining events from the 17th century to the present, the essay references over half a dozen primary source documents, such as *The American Jeremiad* by historian Sacvan Bercovitch, *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* by David Walker, *Slave Religion* by Albert Raboteau, and *Black Theology and Black Power* by James H. Cone..

Sensitivity Notes

The essay describes many violent incidents, including bombings of Black churches, and includes references to discriminatory language used against Black people.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 9: "Self-Defense" by Carol Anderson

"Youth Sunday" by Rita Dove

"On 'Brevity'" by Camille T. Dungy

Chapter 14: "Music" by Wesley Morris *Journalist, Educator, and Contributing Writer for* The New York Times Magazine	pp. 359–375
Summary and High-Level Themes	In this argumentative essay, Morris asserts that the work and influence of Black artists is at the center of and inseparable from American popular culture. The essay follows the influence of Black people on American music culture from the spirituals of enslaved laborers, to the rise of Blackface minstrelsy, and, finally, through the emergence and legacy of Motown Records. The essay concludes with an analysis of the lasting impact on Black people of the American consumption and appropriation of Black experiences and creations. High-level themes in Chapter 14 include American popular culture, Blackface minstrelsy, and respectability politics.
Key Terms	Vocabulary and Historical Terms • Motown Records • Jazz • Spirituals • Blackface Minstrelsy • Jim Crow • Oration
Historical Context	The essay explores the influences of American enslavement, Blackface minstrelsy, and Black artistic innovation on American musical culture. The essay gives detailed descriptions of the musical movements referenced. Prior knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement and racialized violence of the 1960s gives helpful context to both the opening of the essay and descriptions of Motown Records' innovations.
Sensitivity Notes	The essay includes multiple quotations with racial slurs, describes the development and spread of Blackface minstrelsy, and includes a mention of the 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing, in which four young girls were killed. There are also descriptions of love songs that may be sensitive for younger readers.
Read Together with . . .	"The New Negro" by A. Van Jordan *1619* podcast, Episode 3: "The Birth of American Music" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 15: "Healthcare" by Jeneen Interlandi *Staff Writer at* The New York Times Magazine *and Member of* The New York Times *Editorial Board*	pp. 387–394
Summary and High-Level Themes	The essay describes the large discrepancies in health outcomes for Black and Latinx Americans in contemporary society and traces them back to racist health policies begun during Reconstruction. The essay argues that the practice of "withholding [state] resources from people deemed unworthy" underpins the inequitable health outcomes that persist in American society. The essay also highlights Black individuals and organizations who led the way in advocating for equality of access to health care. **High-level themes in Chapter 15 include nationalized versus private medical systems, inequality in health care access, and systemic racism.**
Key Terms	**Vocabulary and Historical Terms** • **Affordable Care Act** • **Medicaid** • **Medicare** • **Reconstruction** • **National Medical Association** • **New Deal**
Historical Context	The essay touches on key historical events, as they relate to health care, between the period of Reconstruction and the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2009.
Read Together with . . .	Chapter 7: "Politics" by Jamelle Bouie *1619* podcast, Episode 4: "How the Bad Blood Started" (tinyurl.com/1619ProjectPodcast)

Chapter 16: "Traffic" by Kevin Kruse *Professor of History*	pp. 405–410
Summary and High-Level Themes	The essay uses Atlanta as example to explain how interstate highways and mass transit systems were designed to reinforce existing neighborhood segregation and to prevent Black commuters from reaching predominantly white suburban communities, where employment prospects were better. **High-level themes in Chapter 16 include urban planning, economic justice, and economic development.**
Key Terms	**Vocabulary and Historical Terms** • **New Deal** • **Redlining** • **Urban Renewal** • **Mass Transit**
Historical Context	The essay covers the development of highways, mass transit systems, and suburbs in Atlanta, beginning in the 1950s and continuing through the present day.
Read Together with . . .	Chapter 7: "Politics" by Jamelle Bouie Chapter 11: "Inheritance" by Trymaine Lee

Chapter 17: "Progress" by Ibram X. Kendi *Professor in the Humanities and Director of the Center for Antiracist Research*	pp. 421–440

Summary and High-Level Themes

"Progress" argues that the narrative of racial progress in the United States is "ahistorical, mythical, and incomplete." The racial progress narrative celebrates advances toward racial justice in the national spotlight, while disregarding the ongoing systemic racial inequities that exist and continually widen in response to victories won by the Black community. Kendi uses the 2008 presidential election of Barack Obama to illustrate how an important victory for the Black community became, for some people, the ultimate indicator of an end to racism. Kendi explores U.S. history since 1619 and presents many examples that were exalted for advancing racial progress, while also bringing attention to the concealed racist conditions and policies that regulated the daily lives of Black people.

High-level themes in Chapter 17 include the racial progress narrative, propaganda, systematic racism, and the dual history in the U.S.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **U.S. Constitution**
- **Civil Rights**
- **Propaganda**
- **Mass Media**
- **Equity Versus Inequity**
- **Injustice**

Historical Terms

- **Colonial Period**
- **American Revolution**
- **Antebellum Era**
- **Reconstruction Era**
- **Jim Crow Era**
- **Civil Rights Movement**
- **Great Recession**

Historical Context

This essay explores the racial progress narrative present in U.S. history from 1619 to today. Prior to reading this essay, students should have some knowledge of U.S. history, specifically of colonial, antebellum, and civil rights time periods.

Sensitivity Notes

Essay mentions white terrorism in the U.S., specifically mentioning Ku Klux Klan.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 1: "Democracy" by Nikole Hannah-Jones

Chapter 10: "Punishment" by Bryan Stevenson

"From Behind the Counter" by Terry McMillan

"Unbought, Unbossed, Unbothered" by Nafissa Thompson-Spires

Chapter 18: "Justice" by Nikole Hannah-Jones New York Times Magazine *Staff Writer and Journalism Professor*	pp. 452–476

Summary and High-Level Themes

"Justice" is an analytical essay arguing that the federal government should pay financial reparations to Black American descendants of enslaved people. The author outlines how Black people have had their labor and wealth stolen and violently destroyed, and have persistently faced structural barriers to acquiring wealth, while white Americans have been structurally advantaged in building wealth throughout U.S. history. The essay synthesizes research by economists and historians to show how and why the racial wealth gap has persisted, and why reparations are necessary for all Americans to move toward a more just society.

High-level themes in Chapter 18 include legal discrimination and other structural barriers to attaining wealth for Black Americans.

Key Terms

Vocabulary

- **Apartheid**
- **Inoculate**
- **Privation**
- **Renege**
- **Restitution**
- **Sectarian**

Political and Historical Terms

- **Wealth / the Racial Wealth Gap**
- **Reconstruction**
- **Reparations**
- **The Homestead Act**
- **Redlining**
- **The Color Line**

Historical Context

"Justice" provides some context on Reconstruction and its aftermath; student understanding can be enriched by further study of these periods. The author briefly mentions reparations provided to Japanese Americans in response to internment during WWII; Native Americans in response to violent displacement and land theft; and Jewish people following the Holocaust. Further examination of one or more of these case studies would provide useful context for comparison and analysis.

Read Together with . . .

Chapter 6: "Capitalism" by Matthew Desmond

Chapter 11: "Inheritance" by Trymaine Lee

1619: "The White Lion" by Claudia Rankine *Writer, Editor, and Poetry Professor*	Poem	pp. 3–4
Summary and Themes	The poem seeks to help the reader understand the historical significance of the moment in August 1619 when the first enslaved Africans were brought to Virginia aboard the *White Lion*, a slave ship. It refers to specific people, places, and aspects of the transatlantic slave trade for which students may need additional context. **The poem contains themes of remembrance and identity.**	
Notes	The poem is unrhymed free verse and is spoken from the perspective of an omniscient historical narrator reflecting on the moment in history.	

1662: "Daughters of Azimuth" by Nikky Finney *Poet and Professor of English Language and Literature*	Poem	pp. 39–41
Summary and Themes	This work of historical fiction describes enslaved women and girls fighting to intentionally prevent pregnancies that could occur from the regular sexual abuse they received from enslavers. The historical event it is paired with, the passing of a statute in 1662 that declared children inherit the legal status of their mother, is an example of a law that further established slavery as a condition of race and incentivized the rape of enslaved Black women. **This piece contains themes of bodily autonomy, resistance, and community care.**	
Notes	Though the piece uses a lot of symbolism and figurative language, there are still some very clear and graphic descriptions of sexual violence. It may be most appropriate for older high school students, though the date in the timeline and the implications of the statute to maintain racial hierarchy are accessible even for middle school learners.	

1682: "Loving Me" by Vievee Francis *Author, Editor, and Associate Professor of English*	Poem	p. 43
Summary and Themes	This short poem, read in the context of the prohibition of interracial marriage by the Virginia House of Burgesses, is the reflection of an enslaved person.	
Historical Context	Laws forbidding interracial marriage existed in the American colonies even when they did not in England and helped to create and reinforce the racial caste system.	

1731: "Conjured" by Honorée Fanonne Jeffers *Poet, Novelist, Essayist, and Professor of English*	Poem	pp. 62–64
Summary and Themes	This poem explores the dueling legacies of an enslaved man named Samba, who led two rebellions, and the French officer who reported him, leading to Samba's eventual murder by the Superior Council in Louisiana. This piece adds to a theme throughout the Project of enslaved people who resisted and rebelled.	
Notes	An elegy examining Samba's refusal to accept bondage as an example of the struggle enslaved Africans faced through the experience of slavery.	

1740: "A Ghazalled Sentence After 'My People . . . Hold On' by Eddie Kendricks and the Negro Act of 1740" by Terrance Hayes *Poet, Author, and Educator*	Poem	pp. 66–68
Summary and Themes	This poem captures the Stono Rebellion, the largest uprising of enslaved people in the American colonies and the catalyst for the Negro Act, which made it illegal for enslaved Africans to move freely, assemble in groups, grow food, earn money, and learn to read and write. The poem utilizes repetition of the word "people" to humanize enslaved Africans and amplify the dehumanizing horror of Louisiana's violent response to the rebellion and the Negro Act of 1740.	
Notes	A ghazal that also borrows language, tone, and style from Kendricks' 1972 song "My People . . . Hold On."	

1770: "First to Rise" by Yusef Komunyakaa *Poet, Author, and Educator*	Poem	pp. 89–90
Summary and Themes	This poem centers on the Boston Massacre and the death of Crispus Attucks, a dockworker who was formerly enslaved and "the first colonist to die for the cause of independence."	
Notes	The poem recounts details from the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770, centering on the life and death of Crispus Attucks. The poem contains some violent imagery and offensive names that describe the individuals killed during the massacre.	

1773: "proof [dear Phillis]" by Eve L. Ewing *Writer and Scholar*	Poem	pp. 93–94
Summary and Themes	This poem focuses on the life of Phillis Wheatley, author of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* and the first African American to publish a book of poetry. The poem's speaker directs statements directly to the deceased Wheatley while exploring Wheatley's work and legacy.	
Notes	The poem references dehumanizing statements regarding Black people by well-known philosophers and historical figures.	

1775: "Freedom Is Not for Myself Alone" by Robert Jones, Jr. *Writer, Novelist, and Activist*	Fiction	pp. 125–126
Summary and Themes	An enslaved man reflects on his choice to fight alongside the British Army during the American Revolution, wondering how much he can trust that he will be freed following the war, as he'd been promised. This piece challenges the hypocrisy of slave owners in the colonies demanding freedom from England, while also turning a critical eye on the narrow-minded way the British soldiers define freedom.	
Notes	This fictional narrative responds to a 1775 declaration by Virginia's colonial governor that offered freedom to all enslaved people held by colonists sympathetic to the Patriot cause in return for their joining the British Army.	

1791: "Other Persons" by Reginald Dwayne Betts New York Times Magazine *Poetry Editor, Lawyer, and Writer*	Poem	pp. 129–133
Summary and Themes	The poem incorporates text from the U.S. Constitution and a letter from Benjamin Banneker to Thomas Jefferson protesting the Three-Fifths Compromise, as part of a personal reflection on injustice against Black Americans today: "I cannot imagine desiring a bullet & settling for a pen. This is America."	
Notes	The poem is divided into three sections. The poet's writing in each section is paired with selections from the Three-Fifths Compromise and the Fugitive Slave Clause from the U.S. Constitution, as well as selections from a 1791 letter that Banneker wrote to Jefferson protesting the treatment and condition of "those of my complexion" in the new nation.	

1800: "Trouble the Water" by Barry Jenkins *Film Director, Producer, and Screenwriter*	Fiction	pp. 156–158
Summary and Themes	In the final moments before Governor James Monroe captures a militia of enslaved African men, 24-year-old Gabriel tests the rising levels of the Brook Swamp that his army cannot pass and accepts his fate that he will be murdered, but finally free.	
Notes	This short story is crafted in the tragic tradition, following the intimate experience of Gabriel, an enslaved blacksmith whose plans to lead a rebellion were thwarted. Gabriel's refusal to accept the dehumanization of enslavement is punctuated by the explicit striking of his last name throughout the text. The writer employs water as a symbol that portends death, rebirth, and liberation.	

1808: "Sold South" by Jesmyn Ward *Writer, Editor, Novelist, and Professor of English*	Fiction	pp. 160–162
Summary and Themes	"Sold South" describes the horror that enslaved Black communities faced as families were separated for domestic trade following the Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves.	
Notes	The Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves ended the legal trade in enslaved people from outside the United States but did not end slavery, nor restrict the buying and selling of the more than one million enslaved people who are already in the country, leading to a massive increase in the domestic trade of enslaved people. The author describes many expressions of family separation and some of the graphic violence endured, always returning to the pronoun "we" to highlight the collective nature of this particular trauma.	

1816: "Fort Mose" by Tyehimba Jess *Poet, Author, and Educator*	Poem	pp. 186–189
Summary and Themes	Jess's poem celebrates the free Black people and fugitives who built community and stockades in Spanish Florida. The poem ends in violence, responding to the Battle of Negro Fort, which sparked the Seminole Wars, but continues to center the genius and resistance of its subjects.	
Notes	The short lines and heavy alliteration, assonance, and consonance of this poem infuse it with energetic momentum and a musical quality.	

1882: "Before His Execution" by Tim Seibles *Poet, Author, and Educator*	Poem	pp. 190–192
Summary and Themes	Seibles's poem focuses on Denmark Vesey, a free Black man and A.M.E. Church member, on the night before his execution by Charleston authorities for planning a rebellion inspired by the uprising in Saint-Domingue, Haiti.	
Notes	This is a fine example of persona poetry and offers an entry point for nuanced conversations on the nature of resistance, violence, and betrayal.	

1830: "We as People" by Cornelius Eady *Poet, Author, and Professor*	Poem	pp. 211–212
Summary and Themes	This poem explores themes of Black agency in the struggle to secure citizenship, as well as Black humanity. In the context of the Colored Conventions movement (c. 1830), contemporary poet Eady writes from the perspective of Black leaders in Philadelphia who sought to mobilize fellow Black Americans.	
Notes	Context on the role of religion and the Black church as political will help students make connections to some of the religious references in the poem.	

1850: "A Letter to Harriet Hayden" by Lynn Nottage *Playwright, Screenwriter, Producer, and Associate Professor of Theatre*	Monologue	pp. 215–217
Summary and Themes	This creative work by contemporary playwright Nottage features the story of a woman who recently escaped to Canada on the Underground Railroad with the help of abolitionist Harriet Hayden. It highlights her internal struggle with newfound liberty, what it means to stay with Hayden for longer or flee further north, and how the latter does not represent abandonment but rather continued resistance.	
Notes	Key terms include "fugitive" (Fugitive Slave Act of 1850) and "colored" as an outdated term.	

1863: "The Camp" by Darryl Pinckney *Author and Contributor to* The New York Review of Books	Fiction	pp. 239–242
Summary and Themes	Pinckney, a contemporary novelist, sets his story at the celebratory scene at Camp Saxton, South Carolina, upon the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. In addition to the celebrations, it honors one of the first Black military units and their contributions: "the Union plus two hundred thousand black warriors will equal liberty." Furthermore, it highlights how white radical abolitionists, like the Colonel, make possible a potential (albeit complicated) future between Black school teacher Charlotte Forten and white Dr. Seth Rogers.	
Notes	The contextual paragraph that precedes the creative work is crucial to understanding the setting and figures mentioned. The style of writing is a bit difficult with longer sentences and missing references for context, and the story is told from the third-person limited perspective of the Colonel. Key terms include "quadroon" as an outdated term.	

1866: "An Absolute Massacre" by ZZ Packer *Writer and Educator*	Fiction	pp. 245–246
Summary and Themes	This creative work by contemporary short fiction writer Packer is set in the aftermath of the New Orleans Massacre of 1866. The language is extremely graphic and has a shock factor, which may mirror the national outrage over the violence that took place following the event. Themes include Black protest, suffrage and voting rights, and white retaliation.	
Notes	Sensitivity warnings around racially-motivated mob violence and killings, including graphic descriptive language and the N-word. Key terms include "secesh" (secessionist). Students will also need to understand the difference between "Democrat" and "Republican" in the Civil War era context, as opposed to its modern-day usage.	

1870: "Like to the Rushing of a Mighty Wind" by Tracy K. Smith *Poet, Writer, Editor, and Professor of African and African American Studies*	Poem	pp. 269–270
Summary and Themes	This creative work by contemporary poet Smith is a found poem, meaning it only uses words from Senator Hiram Revels's speech in 1870. Revels calls on Congress to allow Black elected officials in Georgia to take their rightful seats, as well as Black people to fully enjoy the rights of voting and citizenship after decades of "bondage, sorrow, adjudication delayed."	
Notes	Vocabulary words include "adjudication."	

1883: "no car for colored [+] ladies (or, miss wells goes off [on] the rails)" by Evie Shockley; *Poet and Scholar*	Poem	p. 273
Summary and Themes	This creative work by contemporary poet Shockley is an ode to Ida B. Wells's resistance to giving up her first-class train seat. Themes include gender (e.g. what it means to be a lady) and how race supersedes status.	
Notes	Students with background on Wells, a journalist, will know she spearheaded the anti-lynching campaign and grew into prominence as a trailblazing feminist. This is a good opportunity to teach intersectional feminism.	

1898: "Race Riot" by Forrest Hamer Poet and Psychoanalyst	Poem	pp. 284–286
Summary and Themes	Hamer's poem memorializes the Wilmington massacre, an insurrection carried out by white supremacists who sought, successfully, to overthrow a newly elected biracial local government. The white mob destroyed a Black business district, killed scores of Black people, and drove thousands from their homes.	
Notes	The poem reflects on how the Wilmington massacre is (or is not) taught in North Carolina high school history classes. It begins with several anaphoric lines that destabilize the language used to remember the events of November 10, 1898, and pose the question of how history is (and is not) named, and by whom. The poem also utilizes the violent language and rhetoric utilized by the insurrectionists at the time.	

1921: "Greenwood" by Jasmine Mans *Poet, Author, and Artist*	Poem	pp. 288–291
Summary and Themes	Mans's poem is a meditation on the Tulsa Race Massacre, which killed hundreds of Black community members and razed the Greenwood District, known as Black Wall Street.	
Notes	Many details and images in Mans's poem are drawn from or can be enriched by a deeper knowledge of the history of the Greenwood District and the events of the Tulsa Race Massacre. For example, the poem begins with a reference to 19-year-old Dick Rowland, whose arrest and subsequent threats of lynching prompted an armed group of Black community members to gather around the courthouse in his defense. A confrontation between this group and an armed white group became the impetus for the massacre.	

1925: "The New Negro" by A. Van Jordan *Poet, Author, and Professor of English Language and Literature*	Poem	pp. 306–308
Summary and Themes	This free verse poem describes the significance of the Harlem Renaissance in shaping Black identity, thought, and culture. The poem alludes to different elements of Black cultural art like music, poetry, and even fashion. Jordan weaves the symbol of a lynched Black boy throughout the text to highlight the resilience of Black expression and to mourn those murdered before their innovation could be shared with the world.	
Notes	This poem opens on the visual description of a lynched Black boy and builds on the symbol throughout the poem. The poem references a range of cultural voices and symbols that might be helpful to review: W.E.B. Du Bois, Uncle Tom, Sambo (refer to "The New Negro" by A. Van Jordan), and Harlem Renaissance.	

1932: "Bad Blood" by Yaa Gyasi *Novelist and Author*	Fiction	pp. 310–312
Summary and Themes	In "Bad Blood," a young mother explores her fear about bringing her child to the hospital, reflecting on her mistrust of medical practitioners in treating Black people. Gyasi examines the painful history between Black Americans and public health systems, highlighting the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male and high mortality rates among Black mothers in New York City.	
Notes	The story refers to the Tuskegee Syphilis Study from the 1930s to 1970s. Some background on this event and current reporting on Black perspectives and experiences in health care could be helpful for students. This story includes graphic descriptions of syphilis and a baby putting a used tampon in his mouth.	

1955: "1955" by Danez Smith *Poet, Writer, and Performer*	Poem	pp. 325–326
Summary and Themes	This poem written from the perspective of an unnamed narrator imagines the impact of two specific events from 1955—the murder of Emmett Till and the Montgomery bus boycott—on a teenage boy named as the narrator's grandfather. Most of the poem is spent eulogizing Till and highlighting the extent of the violence he suffered.	
Notes	This poem uses a lot of figurative language and is probably best approached as a whole-class read.	

1960: "From Behind the Counter" by Terry McMillan *Novelist and Short Story Writer*	Fiction	pp. 329–332
Summary and Themes	This short piece of fiction imagines the experience of a Black man working at a restaurant in Greensboro, North Carolina, when four college students begin their silent protest, sitting in at a white's only counter. We see the narrator work through a range of emotions, including fear and pride, before he performs his own small act of bravery in the end.	
Notes	General knowledge about the Civil Rights Movement and the history of sit-ins as a form a protest will be helpful for students understanding of the creative work.	

1963: "Youth Sunday" by Rita Dove *Poet, Essayist, Editor, and Professor of Creative Writing*	Poem	p. 355
Summary and Themes	Written from the perspective of one of the four children killed in the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, by members of the Ku Klux Klan, this poem imagines the moments before the bombing as the girls dress for church.	
Notes	With only 13 lines made up of short sentences, this poem utilizes reflections from the narrator and brief moments of dialogue to capture the energy of the children preparing for church.	

1963: "On 'Brevity'" by Camille T. Dungy *Poet, Essayist, Editor, and Professor of Creative Writing*	Poem	p. 356
Summary and Themes	The poem is written from the perspective of a mother in the present who awakes from a nightmare about the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963 and thinks of her three-month-old daughter. She is struck by the brevity of the lives of the young girls who were killed, imagines what the bombing must have felt like for them, and how their lives could have been different if they were still alive today.	
Notes	This 14-line poem utilizes short sentences, repetition, and metaphor to capture the voice of a mother reflecting on the deaths of the four girls in the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham: "For such terrible brevity—dear Black girls! sweet babies—there's been no end."	

1965: "Quotidian" by Natasha Trethewey *Poet, Writer, and Professor of English*	Poem	pp. 380–382
Summary and Themes	The narrator of this poem describes writings that details his or her mother's daily life in the mid-1960s. The events of the mother's life include typical events like dressmaking, dates, and car problems intertwined with descriptions of the racial violence of the 1960s. The poem concludes with a description of the mother indicating an intention to vote on July 20, 1965.	
Notes	The historical date that proceeds "Quotidian" is August 6, 1965, the date that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law. The poem references the racialized violence of the 1960s and includes examples of violence or injustice in Mississippi at the time including the burning of a cross, police following individuals, and the illegality of interracial marriage. The poem includes several descriptions of violent images, including a police officer choke-holding a protester, a man's body hanging after being burned, and a white couple posing in front of the lynching of two boys.	

1966: "The Panther Is a Virtual Animal" by Joshua Bennett *Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing*	Poem	pp. 384–385
Summary and Themes	The narrator of the poem "The Panther Is a Virtual Animal" uses metaphor and poetic language to describe the panther, a symbol for the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. The narrator imagines the beginnings of the Black Panther Party and the influences on Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in creating the organization. The poem describes the activities of the organization, such as a free breakfast program, and the national impact of the organization, including the change in gun laws in the United States.	
Notes	The historical date that proceeds "The Panther Is a Virtual Animal" is October 15, 1966, the date that the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was founded in Oakland, California.	

1972: "Unbought, Unbossed, Unbothered" by Nafissa Thompson-Spires *Poet, Writer, and Assistant Professor of Literatures in English*	Fiction	pp. 397–399
Summary and Themes	The piece reflects on the presidential candidacy of Shirley Chisholm to present elements of the author's personal experience as a narrative of perseverance in the face of racism and economic hardship.	
Notes	This is a first-person reflection on the author's opinions and experiences presented as an informal essay that reads like a letter between friends. The work is a passionate personal statement and uses some terms for effect that some readers may find offensive out of context.	

1974: "Crazy When You Smile" by Patricia Smith *Poet, Writer, Playwright, Performance Artist, and Professor of English*	Poem	pp. 401–402
Summary and Themes	This poem is a first-person reflection on the poet's experience with racial violence. It is written from the perspective of a teenage girl riding a school bus that is attacked on the outside by a mob.	
Notes	The poem, rendered in unrhymed free verse, recalls images of school desegregation when Black children were menaced by white mobs. It is set in Boston 10 years later to make the point that "nothing much has changed." Two racial slurs are used, and the scene depicted may be frightening to younger children.	

1984: "Rainbows Aren't Real, Are They?" by Kiese Laymon *Writer, Novelist, and Professor of English and Creative Writing*	Fiction	pp. 413–414
Summary and Themes	This story conveys some of the excitement and hope of Reverend Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential bid and its diverse constituency, called the Rainbow Coalition. The author contrasts the hope embodied in Jackson with the fear instilled by Ronald Reagan's call for states' rights four years prior. The work is tinged by a bittersweet exchange between the author and his sister, who says, "Rainbows, they pretty, but they ain't real."	
Notes	This is a first-person reflection on the author's experience presented as a daily journaling exercise. Readers will need to be aware of the Jackson presidential campaign of 1984.	

1985: "A Surname to Honor Their Mother" by Gregory Pardlo *Poet, Writer, Editor, Translator, and Educator*	Poem	pp. 417–418
Summary and Themes	The poem reflects on the fate of a Black liberation group, MOVE, whose members clashed with the Philadelphia police department in 1978, ending in the death of an officer, and 1985, ending in the bombing of the group's communal home and a resulting fire that killed 11 MOVE members and destroyed 65 houses.	
Notes	Readers will benefit greatly from supplementary reading on the incidents described, as they are not especially well-known. MOVE was an unusual organization whose beliefs and practices as rendered in this poem may puzzle readers without further context. The police response and resulting fire are also worthy of further reading as they stand, even today, as shocking examples of abuse of power and disregard for life. The poem refers to the deaths of multiple innocent victims, including children, at the hands of police.	

2005: "At the Superdome After the Storm Has Passed" by Clint Smith *Poet and Writer of Nonfiction*	Poem	pp. 443–444
Summary and Themes	This short poem is set inside the Superdome during Hurricane Katrina and speaks to the ways in which the people and families in need of help and care were dehumanized and shown indifference by people around the nation.	
Notes	It may be helpful to have students review news coverage from leading up to and after Hurricane Katrina, as well as coverage of other devastating storms that have occurred since.	

2008: "Mother and Son" by Jason Reynolds *Poet, Writer, and Novelist*	Fiction	pp. 447–448
Summary and Themes	In this short work of fiction, a narrator recounts spending election day during the 2008 presidential election with his mother. The story highlights the significance of the moment for the characters and the hope and excitement of their entire community.	
Notes	The story details some parts of the voting process, like finding your location and waiting in line. Background on how voting and poll centers work could be useful to students.	

2020: "Progress Report" by Sonia Sanchez *Poet, Writer, Playwright, Professor, and Activist*	Poem	pp. 478–480
Summary and Themes	Sanchez's poem focuses on the 2020 racial justice uprisings in response to the murder of George Floyd and many other Black Americans at the hands of police officers. It centers the protests/protesters and carries the weight of history while embodying a hopeful tone.	
Notes	An introduction to Frantz Fanon and José Martí, whom Sanchez quotes in the poem, will support exploration of the poem. Analysis can also benefit from an introduction to Sanchez herself and her role within the Black Arts Movement and the establishment of Black studies in academia. The poem makes use of several literary devices, including anaphora, open-ended questions, and similes.	

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