

Social Justice in Literature

Course Overview: Social Justice in Literature is an English elective course that will explore the ways in which literature is influenced by the urgent ethical, social, and political topics currently impacting the United States and the world at large. The course will cover four units of study: the African American experience, women’s experience, LGBTQ+ experience, and the immigrant experience. Students will be exposed to unique perspectives told through a combination of nonfiction selections and contemporary young adult literature. In pursuing this inquiry, students will learn about the history of the systems of oppression that impact each group, current activism movements, and ways in which they can create change through culminating project based learning activities. (Open to 11-12 grade students)

Intro:

- 1) Establish classroom guidelines and expectations for safe and supportive dialogue
- 2) Reflect on implicit bias (Teaching Tolerance tool)
- 3) Understand and unpack the 4 I’s of oppression activity
- 4) Review Social Justice Standards (from Teaching Tolerance)
- 5) View Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s TED Talk “Danger of a Single Story”, discuss implications, draw connections

Quarter 1: African American Experience

Learn:

- Review history (1619 project)
- Define terms to know
- Discuss systems of oppression

Read:

- Book options:
 - TBD
- Supplementals:
 - Excerpts from *Stamped* by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds
 - Short stories from *Black Enough* by Ibi Zoboi
 - “Has the American Dream Been Achieved at the Expense of the American Negro” speech by James Baldwin (1965)
 - TED Talks by Clint Smith: “How to Raise a Black Son in America” and “The Danger of Silence”
 - View *13th* Movie

Reflect:

- Draw connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)

Resist:

- Research current state
- Identify modern examples of activism

Act:

- PBL: complete culminating paper, project, or presentation

Quarter 2: Women's Experience	Learn: - Review history (Women's Suffrage, 19th amendment, <i>Mortiz v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue</i>) - Define terms to know - Discuss systems of oppression
	Read: - Book options: ☐ TBD - Supplementals: → “We Should All Be Feminists” TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie → “The Declaration of Sentiments” by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1848) → Excerpts from <i>Untamed</i> by Glennon Doyle → Essays from Audre Lorde (intersectional feminism) → Excerpts from <i>Women, Culture, and Politics</i> by Angela Davis → Excerpts from <i>Lean in</i> by Sheryl Sandberg → View select episodes from <i>Mrs. America</i> show → View <i>On the Basis of Sex</i> movie
	Reflect: Draw connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)
	Resist: - Research current state - Identify modern examples of activism
	Act: PBL: complete culminating paper, project, or presentation
Quarter 3: LGBTQ+ Experience	Learn: - Review history (Stonewall Riot; <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>) - Define terms to know - Discuss systems of oppression
	Read: - Book options: ☐ TBD - Supplementals: → “The Case for Same Sex Marriage” speech → “Why Kids Need to Learn About Gender and Sexuality” by Lindsay Amer → “A Short History of Trans People’s Long Fight for Equality” by Samy Nour Younes → “This is What LGBT Life Looks Like Around the World” by Jennie Chang and Liza Dazao → “What the Gay Rights Movement Learned from the Civil Rights Movement” by Yoruba Richen

	Reflect: • Draw connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)
	Resist: • Research current state • Identify modern examples of activism
	Act: • PBL: complete culminating paper, project, or presentation
Quarter 4: Immigrant Experience	Learn: • Review history (Statue of Liberty plaque) • Define terms to know • Discuss systems of oppression
	Read: • Book options: □ TBD • Supplementals: → “Through the Eyes of a Child Immigrant” TED Talk by Erik Gomez → “Hiding in Plain Sight” TED Talk by Leezia Dhalla → “Things We Carry on the Sea” by Wang Ping → “The Unwritten Letter from My Immigrant Parent” by Muna Abdulhi → “Citizenship” by Javier Zamora → “Everyday We Get More Illegal” by Juan Felipe Herrera (current Poet Laureate) → “Immigrant” by Wyclef Jean → Poems by: Li-Young Lee, Richard Blanco, Naomi Shihab Nye, Rafael Camp, Rupi Kaur
	Reflect: • Draw connections (text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world)
	Resist: • Research current state • Identify modern examples of activism
	Act: • PBL: complete culminating paper, project, or presentation

Standards Covered:

RL.11-12.1-6, 9

RI.11-12.1-4, 6-8

W.11-12.1-2, 4-9

SL.11-12.1-6

L.11-12.1-6