

Race and Ethnic Studies: Power and Perspective

Teacher Manual



Oak Meadow

Oak Meadow, Inc.

Post Office Box 615

Putney, Vermont 05346

oakmeadow.com



Table of Contents

Introduction	v
Course Materials	
Supporting Your Student	
A Note About the Workload	
Lesson 1 What Is Ethnic Studies?	1
Lesson 2 Identity: Who Are You?	7
Lesson 3 Race and Ethnicity	11
Lesson 4 Power and Privilege	15
Lesson 5 Whiteness	19
Lesson 6 Settler Colonialism and Indigeneity	23
Lesson 7 The Legacies of Slavery and Colonialism	29
Lesson 8 Migration and Immigration, Part I	33
Lesson 9 Migration and Immigration, Part II	39
Lesson 10 Orientalism, Islamophobia, and Post-9/11 Racism	45
Lesson 11 Media Stereotypes and Representation	49
Lesson 12 Education and Inequity	53
Lesson 13 Course Project Planning	59
Lesson 14 Art and Protest	63

Lesson 15 Fighting for Change	67
Lesson 16 Red Power and Sovereign Rights	71
Lesson 17 BLM: The Movement for Black Lives	75
Lesson 18 Future Possibilities	79



Introduction

This teacher manual offers suggestions and strategies to help you support your student throughout *Race and Ethnic Studies: Power and Perspective*, a single-semester course. The topics in this course are both timely and powerful; they can also be challenging to explore. Your student may need your support personally and emotionally as well as academically.

Broadly, this course explores the concepts of race and ethnicity in relation to identity, inequality, and social transformation. While students will learn about how racial and ethnic identities are formed, the focus in the course will be on understanding how power and oppression operate across different systems, geographical locations, and time periods. The course focuses on the United States, and your student will be introduced to issues and perspectives about race in different places around the world.

Students will also learn about the activist and community roots of critical race and ethnic studies, with a particular focus on movements during the 1960s. After learning about the roots of race and racism, students often ask “What can be done to challenge racism?” By learning about the long histories of social activism, students will have a strong grasp of the ongoing fight for racial justice.

As you move through this course with your student, remember that learning about race and ethnicity can be difficult because many things we learn impact how we think about ourselves and those around us. While race is a social construct, it has a powerful impact on everyday life.

Some of this information might make you or your student uncomfortable; at the same time, it might be empowering. Part of learning about ethnic studies is unlearning dominant histories that exclude or marginalize different racial or ethnic groups. Although it can be challenging, it is important to remember that one main objective of ethnic studies is examining how power operates in society and impacts groups in different ways. This includes questioning things we might have previously learned and/or taken for granted. Students can be encouraged to embrace empathy as they explore the perspectives and experiences of different ethnic groups.

Course Materials

The following materials are used in this course:

A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America by Ronald Takaki

A Different Mirror for Young People: A History of Multicultural America by Ronald Takaki

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

Blank journal

The reason two different versions of *A Different Mirror* are included is to give students different ways to access the complex material of this course. They are encouraged to use one or both versions, switching back and forth between them throughout the course as needed.

Students will also need to read several children's books (see lesson 13 for more details), and they will need basic art supplies: crayons, colored pencils, or markers.

Included with the course materials is access to Media Education Foundation (MEF) films via the Kanopy website. The Oak Meadow office will provide a private access link to Kanopy. By clicking on the link and entering your OM email address as your Library Card Number, you will gain immediate access to the films for this course. Students not enrolled in Oak Meadow School will be sent an OM email address to access the films.

In lesson 3, students are required to watch "Race: The Power of an Illusion," a three-part series on the history of race and its contemporary implications. This is available at vimeo.com/ondemand/race. A one-week rental costs \$4.99.

Supporting Your Student

During this course, your student will watch a number of documentaries. Because learning about race and racism can bring up strong or confusing emotions, you are encouraged to view the films before your student watches them. This will help you provide support for your student as they process the material. You might have your own reaction to the film, so this approach will give you time to sit with your reaction and emotions prior to working through the material with your student. Alternately, you might view the films together.

Students will be using a variety of internet-based resources. These resources have been compiled on the Oak Meadow website at www.oakmeadow.com/curriculum-links. It may be helpful for you to become familiar with this material so you can provide guidance if your student has questions. It is also important for you to become familiar with the information in the appendix of the student coursebook regarding academic expectations, citing sources, plagiarism, and more. Students are expected to apply this knowledge in all their work.

In this teacher manual, answers are seen in **orange**. You will find all assignments and activities are listed. However, the student coursebook contains additional information. For the full content of the course, please refer to the student coursebook.

It may help to look over the assignments and teacher manual answers for each lesson ahead of time. Some of the information may be useful in guiding your student before or during the assignments.

In this course, there are many open-ended and critical-thinking questions. This is not a “right or wrong answer” type of course. Encourage students to discuss, debate, reflect, and reconsider. If you take an active interest in the lesson topics, it can help create a more meaningful experience for your student.

It is best not to share this teacher manual with your student, as they are expected to produce original work. Any indication of plagiarism needs to be taken seriously. Make sure your student is familiar with when and how to attribute sources. These conventions are explained fully in the appendix of the student coursebook. Although high school students should be fully aware of the importance of academic integrity, you are encouraged to review its significance with your student at the start of the course.

A Note About the Workload

Students vary greatly in terms of their ability to absorb information and express themselves. Some may find the reading in this course takes longer than expected; others may find the written or creative assignments take a great deal of time. In general, students can expect to spend about five hours on each lesson. Students who need more time to complete the work might modify some lessons to focus on fewer assignments or opt to complete some of the written assignments orally. Modifications like these can allow students to produce work that is of a higher quality than if they rush to get everything done. Each lesson in this course can be customized to suit your student’s needs.

Keep an eye on the workload as your student progresses through the course and make adjustments so they have time for meaningful learning experiences.

Lesson

1

What Is Ethnic Studies?

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Reflect on the meaning and impact of race and ethnicity.
- Describe the history of ethnic studies.
- Examine how and why people are motivated to take action.
- Analyze the portrayal of race and ethnicity in media.

The learning objectives in each lesson can be used to assess the student's work and their comprehension of the topics and concepts.

Lesson Introduction

This section, found in the student coursebook, provides essential information about the lesson topics. It is required reading. You may find it helpful for gaining background information and putting the lesson topics in context.

Key Terms

Students will find key terms defined and put into context in this section, which is found in most lessons. Students are expected to understand these terms and use them appropriately in their work.

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction and key terms.
- ☐ Read chapter 1 in *A Different Mirror*.
- ☐ Watch the documentary *On Strike: Ethnic Studies 1969–1999*.
- ☐ Complete journal entry #1.
- ☐ Write a one-page reflection on the documentary.
- ☐ Activity A: Race Discussions
- ☐ Activity B: People Emojis

Reading and Viewing

In this section, you will often find questions or reflection prompts accompanying the reading and viewing assignments. These are meant to guide your study. You do not have to write anything down to submit to your teacher, but you are encouraged to take notes to support your learning.

As your student begins this course, consider what it means to learn and unlearn dominant narratives. Invite your student to be open to discomfort in their learning. The first lesson is an opportunity to have empathy for your student and others and to think about experiences and histories that might be unfamiliar to you.

1. In *A Different Mirror*, read chapter 1, “A Different Mirror: The Making of Multicultural America” (pages 3–20), or read chapter 1, “Why a Different Mirror?” in *A Different Mirror for Young People* (pages 5–23). You may want to read the first few pages from each version to see which one will work best for you. Another reading strategy is to begin with the original book, and then switch to the young people’s version if the reading becomes too challenging.

Throughout the course, you will be given reading assignments from each book, and you can choose which will work best for you. The readings will cover the same basic content. You can expect the original book to be written at an adult reading level and be more complex; the young people’s version uses simpler language and is aimed at students rather than adults. You might find it useful to read the young people’s version first to get a clear sense of the topic and then switch to the original version to gain more insight and knowledge about certain topics. You are free to approach these readings in whatever way works best for you.

Because the original version is a complex text, usually only selected sections of the chapters are required. In the young people’s version, the full chapters are assigned. Although the assignments for each book differ, the reading time is approximately the same.

Reading tip: As you read, please focus on what Takaki means by “The Master Narrative of American History.”

2. Watch the following documentary about how college students fought for ethnic studies. (Video length: 34:35)

On Strike! Ethnic Studies 1969–1999

www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xovOLk9qE8

Consider why the students felt so passionate about fighting for ethnic studies. Why was this important to them?



Think About It

Whose history counts?

Have you learned about the history of slavery, colonialism, and Indigenous peoples in the United States in school? Have you read novels by nonwhite authors in your English courses? Why are some histories taught in school and other histories excluded?

Ask a few of your peers or older friends and family members about their educational experiences and what they think about how—and whose—history is taught in schools.

This section asks students to reflect on the issues and perspectives they are studying. Discussing these topics with your student or with a group can be highly beneficial. Discussions can help students sort out their thoughts, work through emotions, become aware of divergent viewpoints, and reconsider their own ideas in the light of new information.

Assignments

1. For your first journal entry, write about yourself. How do you feel about taking this course on ethnic studies? Are there things you are excited about learning? Do you have any concerns or things you are unsure about regarding race and ethnic studies? What have you learned in the past about ethnic studies? What do race and ethnicity mean to you? How do race and ethnicity impact your life?

You will complete a journal entry in each lesson. The goal of these assignments is to think critically about the lesson topics and their impact on you personally. You aren't expected to have all the answers. In fact, you might find yourself asking more questions. Honest self-expression matters more than writing style or technique. However, in order to express yourself clearly and powerfully, you'll want to use your command of the English language to its fullest.

You might find that writing by hand in a blank journal helps your ideas flow. Some of your journal assignments will be fairly informal, and others will be more involved. For the more complex assignments, you may want to use your handwritten journal to organize your initial thoughts, and then type your response as you revise and shape it into its final form.

For the first journal entry, it might be helpful to have a conversation about the writing prompt before the student begins writing. Students might be unsure of how to express their thoughts about race. This might be the first time they have thought about race in a

critical way, or perhaps they think about it every day, and it is painful or traumatic. In any scenario, a dialogue with your student prior to writing can help them feel supported.

Journal entries will be done throughout the course to help students make personal connections to the material and recognize its relevance in their lives. Because of the sensitive nature of learning about race, journaling provides an important outlet for students to reflect and process the difficult topics.

Journal entries are a unique form of writing because they are so personal. You may want to assess journal entry assignments on the basis of participation alone, or you may choose other criteria, such as clarity of expression, meaningful connections to other topics or areas of life, and exploration of multiple perspectives. In general, strict grammar and writing conventions are not expected in journaling—the main goals are critical exploration, introspection, and authentic self-expression. Some of the journal assignments have more specific parameters, which are explained in the lesson assignment. (If you expect students to write cohesive essays for all of their journal entries, please make this expectation clear.)

2. After watching the documentary *On Strike! Ethnic Studies 1969–1999*, write a one-page reflection about the student movement. Why were ethnic studies controversial? Why did students want ethnic studies included in the curriculum? How do you think these students handled the issue—was it effective? Would you have done anything different? If you were there at the time, would you have participated? Why or why not?

Like most of the assignments in this course, this one has a variety of possible responses. The goal is to have the student become more confident in expressing themselves clearly and explaining their reasoning.

This documentary shows the history of ethnic studies and its roots in student activism. Many students across the country have fought for ethnic studies to be taught in their schools because of a lack of curriculum that addresses colonialism, slavery, racism, and contemporary social issues that have been shaped by these histories. Ethnic studies have generated controversy because some people see it as pushing a political agenda; others may protest the lack of inclusion of one or more ethnic groups.

Activities

Complete both of the following activities. Write a few sentences about each.

The activities in this course are designed to encourage students to think critically about race and ethnicity in everyday life. This includes examining different representations of race, how race is talked about, and how the social construct of race influences individuals, organizations, and systems. Activities will often have a creative component, which can be assessed in terms of the expression of conceptual understanding rather than artistic merit.

Activity A: Race Discussions

Over the course of two days this week, keep track of how many times topics of race or ethnicity appear in media or in conversations you have. Pay attention to everything you normally view or listen to: radio, music, television, YouTube, Instagram and other social media, news outlets, etc. Keep a tally of any mention of race or ethnicity. On the third day, reflect on what you observed about when these topics appeared and why. Do you notice any patterns or trends?

Activity B: People Emojis

Use your smartphone or computer to explore different emojis that represent people. Is there an emoji that looks like you? Do the emojis capture differences in gender or race? How?



(Image credit: Prawny)

Further Study

If you are interested in additional reading about race and ethnic studies, the following texts are recommended. (All of these readings are optional.)

When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America by Ira Katznelson (W.W. Norton and Company, 2006)

The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics by George Lipsitz (Temple University Press, 2018)

Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong by James W. Loewen (The New Press, 2018)

A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn (Harper Collins, 2003)

This section provides additional ways to explore the lesson topics. These activities are optional and can be used to replace other lesson assignments throughout the year.

SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed this lesson, share your work with your teacher. Make sure each assignment is clearly labeled. Please proofread your work and make any corrections before notifying your teacher that it is ready to review.

If you have any questions about the lesson assignments or how to share your work, contact your teacher. If you would like to modify any of the assignments or activities (now or in future lessons), please consult with your teacher first.

In the coursebook, students are advised to share their work at the end of each lesson. This will help them receive timely feedback. If you (or the supervising teacher) prefer a different submission schedule, make sure your student understands when and how to submit work and when to expect feedback.

Lesson

2

Identity: Who Are You?

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Identify different aspects that can make up a person's identity.
- Examine the process of identity formation in individuals and society.
- Examine how a sense of identity can change over time.

Reading and Viewing

1. Read the novel *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (110 pages). *The House on Mango Street* is a coming-of-age story about a young girl, Esperanza, and her relationship to place, family, culture, and more.

Reading tip: What aspects of identity are important to Esperanza? How do other people try to characterize her identity? How does where she lives impact her identity? As you read, notice how her identity and concept of self change over time.

2. Watch the following video. (Video length: 5:04)

"The Bear That Wasn't"

www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt106ojXPYE&ab_channel=FacingHistoryandOurselves

Consider the different aspects of the bear's identity. How did other people characterize the bear's identity? How did their perspective impact the bear?

Assignments

1. Complete journal entry #2 by writing an identity autobiography using the following prompts:
 - What parts of your identity are important to you?

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction and key terms.
- ☐ Read *The House on Mango Street*.
- ☐ Watch the video "The Bear That Wasn't."
- ☐ Complete journal entry #2.
- ☐ Create an identity map, diagram, or other type of graphic.
- ☐ Activity A: Family History Interview
- ☐ Activity B: Me, My Race, and I

- Why are they important?
- What is your race and ethnicity?
- Do you remember the first time you learned about your race and ethnicity?
- Has your sense of self been influenced by the way others see you? If so, how?

This journal prompt will help students begin to understand the complex layers of a person's identity. The student's sense of identity may or may not include race or ethnicity. This week's reading and viewing assignments examine how identity can change over time, either from internal forces (such as growth or experiences) or external forces (such as the impact of how others see you or what they expect of you). External influences can have powerful, long-lasting effects on a person's sense of self.

2. Based on your journal entry, draw an identity map, diagram, or other graphic using these categories as a starting point: race, gender, sexuality, nationality, religion, birth order, country of residence, or country of birth. You may also highlight other parts of your identity that are important to you.

Your student may not be accustomed to creative expression in relation to their academic work. The identity map or diagram is an opportunity for your student to visualize what identity means to them and think about why certain parts of their identity are more important to them than others. This map can take any form. A basic example is in the student coursebook.

Activities

Complete the following activities.

Activity A: Family History Interview

Interview an older member of your household about their identity and memories related to their family history. Start with the following questions:

- Where and when were you born?
- Where are your ancestors from?
- How did your family end up living in your current region?
- Are you named after anyone in your family?
- What did/do your parents do for a living?
- What is your earliest memory of your family?
- Where did you sleep in your house?

- What was your favorite food to eat as a child? Why?
- What holidays did your family celebrate?

Include any other questions you want to add. Invite your interviewee to share anything else they'd like to include about their family history.

Write a reflection on your interview. Did anything surprise you? Did the interview help you better understand your own personal history and identity?

If your student is adopted or lives with guardians, this interview can help reveal how the person's family history and experiences shaped their sense of self. A student's adoptive parents or guardians may have a profound influence on the student, so their history is important.

Activity B: Me, My Race, and I

Explore the following slideshow:

"Me, My Race, and I: What's Race Got to Do with It?"

www.pbs.org/race/005_MeMyRaceAndI/005_00-home.htm

Consider the role race has played in your life. After viewing the slideshow, is there an experience that you look back on with a different perspective or understanding? Describe this in writing or in another format (artistic, creative, photographic, etc.).

Further Study

To explore what it means to have a cultural identity, read the following article. (All Further Study activities are optional.)

"What Is Your Heritage? Discover Your Cultural Identity"

www.familysearch.org/blog/en/what-is-heritage

Lesson

3

Race and Ethnicity

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Explain race as a social construct.
- Differentiate between different types of racism.
- Examine the historical origins of racism.

Reading and Viewing

1. Read the following articles:

“Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race”

newsreel.org/guides/race/10things.htm

“The Historical Origins and Development of Racism”

www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-02-01.htm

2. Watch the following video by the African American Policy Forum. (Video length: 4:08)

“Unequal Opportunity Race”

www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBb5TgOXgNY&ab_channel=aapfvideo

What are different examples of institutional and structural racism in the short video? How did you feel while watching this video?

3. Watch *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (California Newsreel 2003), a three-part series on the history of race and its contemporary implications. Each film is approximately one hour long.

“Part I Race: The Difference Between Us”

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction and key terms.
- ☐ Read the following articles:
 - “Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race”
 - “The Historical Origins and Development of Racism”
- ☐ Watch the video “Unequal Opportunity Race.”
- ☐ Watch the three-part series *Race: The Power of an Illusion*.
- ☐ Complete journal entry #3.
- ☐ Explore the website *Race: The Power of an Illusion*.
- ☐ Activity: Alien Invasion

“Part II Race: The Story We Tell”

“Part III Race: The House We Live In”

This series is available at vimeo.com/ondemand/race. A one-week rental costs \$4.99. (If you are unable to access it, contact your teacher for alternate suggestions.)



Think About It

“There is no such thing as race. Racism is a construct; a social construct. And it has benefits. Money can be made off of it. People who don’t like themselves can feel better because of it. It can describe certain kinds of behavior that are wrong or misleading. So [racism] has a social function. But race can only be defined as a human being.” —Toni Morrison

Think about the function of race as a social construct. Whom does it benefit? Whom does it harm?

Assignments

1. Complete journal entry #3 by responding to the following prompt: Race is a social construct. There is no biological essence. Race is not natural or neutral.

Discuss this idea in your own words. Use the terminology and concepts you have learned. Explain the reasoning behind your ideas and provide supporting details.

The readings and videos this week will help debunk certain beliefs about race and biology. Because race is so ingrained in our society, it can seem *natural*. However, as your student will learn, racism and biological references were used to establish racial inferiority with no scientific basis. Race is not natural, it is socially constructed. In fact, there is no biological essence to race. This is the key takeaway from this week’s lesson. Make sure this understanding is reflected in the student’s work.

2. Explore the following interactive website:

Race: The Power of an Illusion

www.pbs.org/race/001_WhatIsRace/001_00-home.htm

Start by reading the section “What Is Race?” on the home page. Read through facts 1–10 by clicking on the circles at the bottom of the box titled “Is Race for Real?” List at least three facts that you found particularly meaningful or surprising. Explain your choices. How does each fact fit with or relate to what you already know or contradict something you thought was true?

Students should explain their choice of facts to highlight by making connections with prior knowledge or personal experience. For instance, students who choose to highlight quick fact #5— “Racial practices were institutionalized within government, laws, and society” —may recall how racial discrimination was institutionalized by the Constitution of the United States when it stated, for taxation and representation purposes, “three fifths of all other persons” would be counted, meaning those who were enslaved counted as less than a whole person.



Around the World: Global Perspectives

Despite race having no biological basis, racial discrimination is a persistent global issue. For instance, many ethnic minorities in the Middle East region have experienced discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, and religion. Sometimes racial discrimination occurs when people have been displaced or find themselves stateless after political and military actions rearrange borders or force relocation.

The Kurds are one of the indigenous groups in the Middle East. The BBC article “Who Are the Kurds?” says the following:

“Between 25 and 35 million Kurds inhabit a mountainous region straddling the borders of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Armenia. They make up the fourth-largest ethnic group in the Middle East, but they have never obtained a permanent nation state. . . . Today, they form a distinctive community, united through race, culture and language, even though they have no standard dialect. They also adhere to a number of different religions and creeds, although the majority are Sunni Muslims. . . .

“There is deep-seated hostility between the Turkish state and the country’s Kurds, who constitute 15% to 20% of the population. Kurds received harsh treatment at the hands of the Turkish authorities for generations. In response to uprisings in the 1920s and 1930s, many Kurds were resettled, Kurdish names and costumes were banned, the use of the Kurdish language was restricted, and even the existence of a Kurdish ethnic identity was denied, with people designated ‘Mountain Turks’.”

To learn more, read the full article below.

“Who Are the Kurds?”

www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29702440#:~:text=Between%2025%20and%2035%20million,obtained%20a%20permanent%20nation%20state

The information and resources in this Around the World section can be used for discussion purposes, optional further study, or as a substitute or an additional assignment.

Activities

Complete the following activity.

Activity: Alien Invasion

Imagine an alien arrived on Earth and was trying to understand race and gender. How would you explain it? Write a dialogue between you and the alien about race and gender in the United States. (Assume the alien can understand your language and communicate.) Another option is to use a drawing, comic-style panel, play, music, or other creative art form to convey the concepts of race and gender to your alien friend.

Let the alien ask tough questions that you have to answer, rather than just having them listen and agree with everything you say.

This activity has a playful tone, but students will need to think critically about how race and gender are presented, understood, and experienced in order to explain the concepts fully. Look for both race and gender to be addressed. Students might convey their own perception or experience of race and gender, or they might describe race and gender from a biological, behavioral, or cultural perspective. For instance, they might give examples of how people react differently to others, have different expectations, or form assumptions based on race or gender.

In their imaginary dialogue, students should respond to challenging questions from the alien. For instance, if they tell the alien that females are able to produce children, the alien might ask if all females can do this, and the answer would have to be no. The alien might then follow up with “If not all females can produce children, that is not a valid description of the female gender.” This method of questioning should help students dig deeper into the concepts of race and gender.

Lesson

4

Power and Privilege

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Examine the four different types of power.
- Analyze the relationship between power and privilege.
- Explain how power and privilege impact your life based on your identity and experiences.
- Define intersectionality.

Reading and Viewing

1. To learn more about intersectionality, read a short history of the concept in the following article:

“What Is Intersectionality? Let These Scholars Explain the Theory and Its History”

time.com/5560575/intersectionality-theory

2. Read the following article by Peggy McIntosh to learn more about privilege and power:

“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf

Reading tip: This article emphasizes individual privileges. However, while privilege can be experienced on an individual level, it is also part of a broader system that creates benefits and disadvantages for different groups based on a socially constructed hierarchy. The short video “Unequal Opportunity

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction and key terms.
- ☐ Read the following articles:
 - “What Is Intersectionality? Let These Scholars Explain the Theory and Its History”
 - “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”
- ☐ Watch the film *A Class Divided*.
- ☐ Complete journal entry #4.
- ☐ Write about the experiment described in *A Class Divided*.
- ☐ Activity: Intersectionality

Race,” which you watched in the last lesson, will help you understand the difference between individual and structural benefits and disadvantages.

3. Watch the following film. (Film length: 53:05)

A Class Divided

www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/class-divided

Language content warning: In the documentary, one of the students uses the “N” word, a racial slur. Please note that this language is rooted in a deep history of racism and anti-Blackness and was/is used as a tool to subordinate Black people.

When watching *A Class Divided*, think about what you’ve learned about race as a social construct and how meaning is assigned to different groups. In this experiment, how is eye color used to assign meaning to different groups? What does this teach children about difference and power? Remember, it is not simply that these groups are socially constructed as “different”—it is about the power assigned to different groups and how some groups are positioned as superior and inferior to one another.



Think About It

When we think about power, it is usually understood as someone having power over someone else. But what about other kinds of power?

Power can describe domination, resistance, collaboration, and/or transformation. The different types of power are:

Power over (coercion, violence, abuse, force, oppression)

- Example: A bully at school who creates an unsafe, unhealthy atmosphere that makes learning difficult or unsustainable.

Power with (collective)

- Example: Your power to work together with your friends to demand that every person deserves a good education.

Power to (personal agency)

- Example: Your power to speak up for yourself or make your own choices.

Power within (personal sense of self-worth and self-knowledge)

- Example: Your power to know that you deserve a good education.

Assignments

1. For journal entry #4, make a list of different advantages (privileges) you benefit from based on different aspects of your identity. This could be age, ability, gender, race, sexuality, religion, etc. You can use the list in “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” to help you generate your list. Does anything about your list surprise you?

By understanding their privilege in relation to power, students will gain insight into their own place in society as well as how they might benefit from certain forms of privilege while, at the same time, being at a disadvantage as a result of other social positionings. This journal response could reveal conflicting or unsettling emotions, or it may reveal a need for students to develop greater empathy or understanding. Depending on the student’s response, you may want to encourage discussions or additional ways to process the information.

2. After you watch the documentary *A Class Divided*, write a one-page essay using the following prompt: Is Jane Elliot’s blue eyes/brown eyes experiment relevant to today’s society?

After you’ve written a rough draft, take the time to revise your essay to make it more expressive and effective. Think about your word choice and phrasing. Are you expressing your ideas clearly? Are you using reasoning and relevant details to develop your stance? After your revisions are complete, proofread it to make sure you are delivering your best work.

The student’s response should show evidence of reasoning and provide details that support the main premise. Look for a polished piece of writing.

The documentary *A Class Divided* will help students make connections between the social constructions of race, power, and privilege. The goal is not simply focusing on one’s individual identity (although that is an important starting point) but to understand how power and privilege exist as part of broader social systems. This will provide a strong foundation for the following lesson on whiteness.

You might want to use the resource below to help facilitate a dialogue about racism, prejudice, and discrimination after watching the film.

“Student Assignment Sheet: *A Class Divided*”

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/divided/assignment1.html

The resource will also be useful to guide future discussions on related topics. Feel free to refer to it as you move through the course with your student.

Activities

Complete the following activity.

Activity: Intersectionality

To further understand intersectionality, watch the following keynote speech by Mia Mingus, which was presented at the 2018 Disability Intersectionality Summit in Cambridge, Massachusetts:

“DIS2018: Mia Mingus, opening keynote presenter”

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm21KpsNk1s&ab_channel=DisabilityIntersectionalitySummit

If you prefer to read the transcript, it can be found here:

“‘Disability Justice’ Is Simply Another Term for Love”

leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2018/11/03/disability-justice-is-simply-another-term-for-love

Afterward, create a graphic or drawing that expresses your understanding of the concept of intersectionality.

Intersectionality describes how racism and other forms of oppression interact or intersect. As noted in the lesson introduction in the student coursebook, intersectionality is not simply adding levels of oppression; for example, a queer Latina who experiences oppression because of her position as LGBTQ, female, and Latina (thus, triple oppressed using an additive framework). Instead, intersectionality looks at the relationship between racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression. Instead of merely being additive, the effects are exponential, systemic, and wide-reaching. Look for the student’s response to reflect this complexity.

Further Study

Watch Kimberlé Crenshaw’s 2016 TED Talk about intersectionality. (Video length: 18:41)

“The Urgency of Intersectionality”

www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en

Content warning: the video contains images and descriptions of violence.

Lesson

5

Whiteness

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Understand whiteness and white supremacy as historical constructions.
- Analyze the connection between privilege and oppression.
- Explain what it means to make whiteness visible.

Reading and Viewing

The material in this lesson will help your student historically contextualize “white” as a racial identity. It will be helpful to return to the notion that race is a social construct as your student moves through this lesson’s materials.

1. Choose one of the reading assignments below.

In *A Different Mirror*, read the following sections from chapter 6, “Fleeing the ‘Tyrants Heel’: ‘Exiles’ from Ireland”:

- Chapter beginning (131)
- “Behind the Emigration: ‘John Bull Must Have the Beef’” (132–137)
- “‘Green Power’: The Irish ‘Ethnic’ Strategy” (151–154)

In *A Different Mirror for Young People*, read chapter 6, “The Flight from Ireland” (105–124).

Reading tip: Consider how the category of “white” changed over time. What contributed to the Irish transitioning from being considered white ethnics or nonwhite to white?

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction and key terms.
- ☐ Read chapter 6 in *A Different Mirror*.
- ☐ Read “How Italians Became ‘White.’”
- ☐ Watch the film *White Like Me: Race, Racism and White Privilege in America*.
- ☐ Complete journal entry #5.
- ☐ Write a reflection about white privilege.
- ☐ Activity: Talking About Whiteness

2. Read the following article:

“How Italians Became ‘White’”

www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/12/opinion/columbus-day-italian-american-racism.html

3. On the Kanopy website, watch the following video. (Video length: 57 minutes)

White Like Me: Race, Racism and White Privilege in America (Media Education Foundation, 2007)

All Kanopy/Media Education Foundation films are accessed using the private access link provided to you. (See the Course Materials section of the introduction for more details.)



Think About It

Does studying or learning about whiteness put too much focus on white people as opposed to dismantling or challenging whiteness? Or is it important to talk about whiteness to make it visible and denormalize it as a racial category?

If possible, discuss these questions with both white people and those who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color).

Assignments

1. Complete journal entry #5. Building on last week’s journal entry about privilege and power, dive deeper into your experiences with advantage and disadvantage.

Remember that power and privilege is not only about individual experiences but also about connections to broader systems of power and oppression. That is, one might be affected on an individual level (for instance, through microaggressions, such as when a person assumes someone doesn’t speak English or was not born in the United States because of the color of their skin, how they dress, or their accent) or on an institutional level (such as when a student is not admitted into a college or university because of the high school they attended).

Can you identify a specific experience where you benefitted from your social position or were hindered by it? How does reflecting on this experience make you feel?

It may help students to revisit “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (in the previous lesson) as they work on their journal entry. Also encourage them to empathize with others and try to put themselves in someone else’s shoes. Empathy is a crucial component of understanding how power works and how we are impacted by privilege and disadvantage in different ways.

2. Central to Tim Wise’s argument in *White Like Me: Race, Racism and White Privilege in America* is the impact of whiteness on white people as well as its cost. Write a one-page reflection on why Wise

thinks it is important for white people to address racism and white privilege. How does making whiteness visible attempt to address racial inequality and racism?

Wise builds a strong argument that it is in everyone's best interest for white people to acknowledge and help dismantle racism and white privilege. Recognizing the systemic oppression of people of color is an essential first step, however uncomfortable it might be. In the student's reflection, look for a direct response to the prompt as well as a personal connection between the material and the student's own life or experiences.

Activities

Complete the following activity.

Activity: Talking About Whiteness

Explore the following resource from the National Museum of African American History:

"Talking About Race: Whiteness"

nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness

Create an image or word collage about what you learned, what you were surprised by, or your experiences and emotions around this topic.

Further Study

Tim Wise's lecture *White Like Me: Race, Racism and White Privilege in America* was filmed in 2007. Do you think things have changed? Why or why not? Make a bulleted list in your journal of what has or has not changed.