

English and Social Studies Curriculum Guide

for the Sisters of Mercy Critical Concerns



SECTION 1: ANTI-RACISM



Mercy Education
System of the Americas

Educación de la Misericordia
de las Américas

Anti-Racism



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Definition

Racism is individual prejudice plus the misuse of power by systems or institutions. An individual can be guilty of racist actions due to their prejudice, but the real evil of racism rests in its power to infect systems and institutions for generations, for example, in housing patterns in the U.S. and access to education.

Characteristics

- Racism is a form of violence against another and involves attitudes, words, and actions that exclude and condemn based on race.
- Racism is not only found among individuals; it is a systemic evil that requires system-wide solutions.
- Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control. (OSU Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity)
- The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations. (OSU Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity)
- The Sisters of Mercy believe racism is an evil affecting everyone. They work to mobilize people in recognizing and dismantling institutional racism in order to become an anti-racist multicultural community. They advocate for upholding the

voting rights of marginalized Americans and for a fair criminal justice system, and point out racism wherever it exists.

Essential Questions

- What are the origins of racism and how can it be seen throughout history?
- How can racism be seen in the world today?
- What is “implicit bias” and what are some examples in daily life?
- What actions or policies would best combat racism today?
- What racial conflicts besides black/white are prevalent today?
- How is racism related to the other critical concerns?
- How was redlining used to create inequality?
- What is the problem of mass incarceration?
- What is “white privilege” and how does it affect people of different races?

Recommended Topics

- Mass Incarceration
- Redlining, Sundown Towns, Restrictive Covenants
- Police Violence
- Systemic/Institutionalized Racism vs. Interpersonal Racism
- NFL Protests
- The Lost Cause and Confederate Statues
- Segregation in the U.S.
- Civil Rights Movement
- Black Lives Matter
- White Supremacy
- White Privilege
- White Fragility
- Racial Profiling
- Death Penalty
- Social Darwinism
- History of Slavery in the U.S.
- Abolition Movement
- Racism and Native Americans
- School Segregation
- U.S. Criminal Justice System
- Restorative Justice
- Hate Crimes
- Anti-Muslim Sentiment Since 9/11
- South Africa and Apartheid

- Holocaust/Genocide Studies

Recommended Resources

- [Sisters of Mercy Justice Site on Anti-Racism](#)
- [Sisters of Mercy Links on Combating Racism](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League](#)
- [Tolerance](#)
- [Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training](#)
- [Project Implicit \(Harvard\)](#)
- [USCCB on Racism](#)
- [Equal Justice Initiative](#)
- [The Marshall Project](#)
- [Ferris State Jim Crow Museum](#)
- [Innocence Project](#)
- [Conceptual Unit Outlines](#)
- [Intergroup Resources on Institutional Racism](#)
- [Racial Equity Resource Guide](#)
- [Courageous Conversations](#)

Recommended Readings

Articles

- ["Letter from Birmingham Jail"](#)
 - a. <http://www.usccb.org/news/2013/13-068.cfm>
- [McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack"](#)
- ["Why Colin Kaepernick and I Decided To Take A Knee"](#)
- ["The long, painful and repetitive history of How Baltimore became Baltimore"](#)
- ["Debunking the scientific and social definitions of race"](#)
- ["Lesson of a Lifetime"](#)

Fiction

- Ellison, Ralph. *The Invisible Man*
- Larsen, Nella. *Passing*
- Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye, Song of Solomon, Beloved*, etc.
- Guterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*
- Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*
- Hurston, Zora Neal. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give*
- Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*
- Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*

Nonfiction

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow*
- Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*
- Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy*
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night*
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*
- Cozzens, Peter. *The Earth is Weeping: The Epic Story of the Indian Wars for the American West*
- Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*
- Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth Of Other Suns*
- Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki and James D. Houston. *Farewell to Manzanar*
- King Jr., Martin Luther. *Letter from Birmingham Jail*
- Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Recommended Videos

- [Mitch Landrieu Addresses Removal of Confederate Statues](#)
- [The Danger of a Single Story \[TED Talk\]](#)
- [How Southern Socialites Rewrote Civil War History](#)
- [Redlining](#)
- [Mass Incarceration, Visualized](#)
- [Understanding white fragility](#)
- “Eyes on the Prize” Documentary Series (PBS)
- “13th” Documentary (Netflix)

| Lesson with Link and Source | Lesson Topics | Connection to English Curriculum | Connection to Social Studies Curriculum |
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| Implicit Bias by Facing History and Ourselves | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implicit vs. Explicit Bias - Confirmation Bias - Prevalence of Misinformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when students are studying a work of fiction involving issues of race - What examples of explicit and implicit bias are present in the work? How is it revealed through direct and indirect characterization? - How is the time period of the work similar and/or different from today regarding racism? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the Age of Jackson and the Indian Removal Act (USHIS 1830) Chinese Exclusion Act (USHIS 1882) Ida B. Wells and the anti-lynching movement (USHIS 1890s) Woodrow Wilson’s segregating the civil service, federal government, and military (1913-1948) - Use when exploring Social Psychology |
| U.S. Census Controversy by the Anti-Defamation League | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purpose of U.S. Census - Voting Rights Act - Building an Argument - Writing a Persuasive Letter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when teaching students how to write a persuasive letter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the Freedom Rides in the South (USHIS 1950-60) and Immigration restriction quotas following WWI (USHIS 1917-1920s) |
| Racial Stereotypes by Discovery Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stereotypes - Bias | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when students are studying a work of fiction involving issues of race - What racial stereotypes are present in the work? - How would | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the beating of Rodney King and the subsequent L.A. Riots (USHIS 1991) and the rise of phrenology & other pseudosciences to |

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| | | characters from the work interact with public figures today? | justify racism (USHIS 1830) |
| Racism and the Criminal Justice System by the Anti-Defamation League | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unearned Privilege - Incarceration Rates by Race - Racial Profiling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when students are studying a work of fiction involving the justice system (<i>Native Son</i>, <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>): - How do incidents involving the justice system in the work relate to real incidents today? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring vagrancy laws targeting newly freed African Americans (USHIS 1860s); Executive Order 9066 and the internment of Japanese Americans (USHIS 1942); Convict lease system in the South and its detrimental impact on labor both black & white (USHIS 1840s-1928) |
| Voting Rights Act by Teaching Tolerance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting Rights Act of 1965 - Disenfranchisement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when studying novels like <i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> with settings in the Civil Rights Era - Use when studying works that involve person v society conflicts around the Voting Rights Act. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring gerrymandering throughout the history of politics (USHIS 1812-present) |
| Baseball, Race, and Ethnicity by Library of Congress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseball as Window into History and Culture - Analyzing Primary Sources - Persuasive Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when studying fictional works involving sports, especially baseball - Use when studying persuasive writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the integration of baseball with Jackie Robinson (USHIS 1896-1947) |

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| <p>Hate Crimes by Teaching Tolerance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hate Crimes Legislation - Protected Populations - Monologue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when studying fictional or nonfictional works involving hate crimes - Use when teaching how to write and deliver a monologue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the Colfax Massacre (USHIS 1873) the reemergence of the Ku Klux Klan (USHIS 1920s)the lynching of Emmett Till (USHIS 1955) |
| <p>Mass Incarceration by Teaching Tolerance</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mass Incarceration - Jim Crow - Social Control - Caste System - War on Drugs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when studying works of fiction or nonfiction dealing with incarceration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use when exploring the crack cocaine epidemic and resulting mass incarceration (USHIS 1980-1995) |