

# Unit 1: New Unit

Content Area: **Template**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **Full Year**  
Status: **Published**

## GOALS/PURPOSE

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### Purpose

The Amistad Commission ensures that the Department of Education and public schools of New Jersey implement materials and texts which integrate the history and contributions of African-Americans and the descendants of the African Diaspora.

### Goals

1. To infuse the history of Africans and African-Americans into the social studies curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete and inclusive history.
2. To ensure that New Jersey teachers are equipped to effectively teach the revised social studies core curriculum content standards.
3. To create and coordinate workshops, seminars, institutes, memorials and events which raise public awareness about the importance of the history of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in global context.

<https://www.nj.gov/education/amistad/about/>

ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.11–12.3.C	Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.
ELA.L.VI.11–12.4.D	Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
ELA.RI.CR.11–12.1	Accurately cite a range of thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text.
ELA.RL.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
ELA.RI.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of an author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop.
ELA.RL.CT.11–12.8	Demonstrate knowledge of, analyze, and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
ELA.RI.CT.11–12.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and scientific significance for their

purposes, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history and texts proposing scientific or technical advancements.

ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

ELA.SL.PE.11–12.1.B

Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.

## **READ ALOUD TEXTS/EXCERPTS**

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**Superman Smashes the Klan** Gene Luen Yang, writer; Gurihiru, artist

2020, DC Comics

“The year is 1946, and the Lee family has moved from Metropolis' Chinatown to the center of the bustling city. While Dr. Lee is greeted warmly in his new position at the Metropolis Health Department, his two kids, Roberta and Tommy, are more excited about being closer to their famous hero, Superman!” - from the publisher.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by **Michelle Alexander** **The New Jim Crow**

A critical analysis of the role the justice system plays in the oppression of African Americans in the United States.

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by [Bryan Stevenson](#)

An unforgettable true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to end mass incarceration in America — from one of the most inspiring lawyers of our time.

<https://justmercy.eji.org/> (this website explores more work that the author has done and connects to the book)

**Punching the Air Hardcover – Illustrated, September 1, 2020**

by [Ibi Zoboi](#) (Author), [Yusef Salaam](#) (Author)

***New York Times* and *USA Today* bestseller \* Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor \* Walter Award Winner \* Goodreads Finalist for Best Teen Book of the Year \* *Time Magazine* Best Book of the Year \* *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year \* Shelf Awareness Best Book of the Year \* *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year \* *Kirkus* Best Book of the Year \* New York Public Library Best Book of the Year**

From award-winning, bestselling author Ibi Zoboi and prison reform activist Yusef Salaam of the Exonerated Five comes a powerful YA novel in verse about a boy who is wrongfully incarcerated. A must-read for fans of Jason Reynolds, Walter Dean Myers, and Elizabeth Acevedo.

## **ARTICLES AND/OR VIDEO RESOURCES (FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES)**

**Please note: check lessons FIRST for articles and video resources for instructional purposes.** Many lessons have EXTENSIVE resources including articles, youtube videos, etc connected to each topic. They are embedded with links and include handouts so please look there first for all resources! Even if you are not going to use the entire lesson, you can use the resources that connect to the topic so please check there first. They are organized well under lesson topics.

[Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian novelist, nonfiction writer, and short story writer. In this transcript from her TED talk, Adichie discusses her experiences with literature and the influence stories can have on constructing one's understanding of the world and its people.](#)

Paired texts and related media are also connected to this resource.

[Zora Neale Hurston \(1891-1960\) was an African American novelist, short story writer, folklorist, anthropologist, and one of the most important figures of the Harlem Renaissance. In this personal essay, Hurston explores her identity as a Black woman in the early 1900s. Note: Throughout this work, Hurston uses the term "colored" as a racial descriptor. The term "colored" was introduced in the United States in the early 19th century and while it was initially accepted by Black Americans it has since become an offensive and outdated term.](#)

Paired texts and related media are also connected to this resource.

## **WEBSITES (FOR STUDENTS TO INTERACT WITH)**

All of the following could be used by teachers first (teachers choose a video/article/podcast etc for students to use on a specific topic) or for students' independent research (entire website is shared and students browse/research a

topic):

[Collingswood School Library Resources- especially Current Events and Controversial Issues section and under Social Studies African American History](#) - students will have to use their school sign on to enter and investigate

[History.com - focus on Black History](#)

There are many videos, which could be used for students to research independently or for a teacher to choose for students to watch

[Afro-Americans in New Jersey: a short history](#) - on the NJ Library Page, divided by year, this can be downloaded or used as a link

[African American Museum in Philadelphia](#) - exhibitions are changed regularly and the pass to the museum is available in the Collingswood Public library

[WHYY Podcasts and Articles Local to Philadelphia](#)

Local issues related to race

[biography.com](#)

[Key Concept Videos](#)

Excellent series of 10 videos that can be assigned individually

[Library of Congress Primary Sources](#)

[Smithsonian Online about the History of Hip Hop](#)

## **PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS (LESSON PLANS, REPRODUCIBLES, ETC.)**

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/parallels-between-mass-incarceration-and-jim-crow>

<https://ejj.org/racial-justice/> (many articles with videos with headings:)

Teachers could lead or students could explore on their own

The Transatlantic Slave Trade

Enslavement

Reconstruction

Racial Terror Lynching

Segregation

## **Unit 4**

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### **Unit 4 JIM CROW AND THE ROOTS OF MASS INCARCERATION (100-130)**

How is mass incarceration of Black Americans a continuation of enslavement and Jim Crow?

Students will:

- List and define examples of Jim Crow.
- Describe the connections between Jim Crow and the mass incarceration of Black Americans today.
- Investigate the history of convict leasing through an analysis of primary source documents.
- Examine one way in which individuals are working to reform the criminal justice system today.

[Jim-Crow-and-the-Roots-Unit-4-LP.pdf](#)

## **Unit 3**

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### **Unit 3 THE BACKLASH AGAINST INTERRACIAL DEMOCRACY (90 mins)**

How was racial violence and terror used against Black Americans during Reconstruction and what were the goals of its perpetrators?

Students will:

- Discuss the backlash and violence against Black communities during the Reconstruction era.
- Analyze images from the 1860s and 1870s depicting the promises of Reconstruction and threats to Black progress. → Identify the motivations of the Ku Klux Klan and the tactics they employed to dehumanize Black people.
- Interpret primary source documents demonstrating ways in which some Black people resisted intimidation by white supremacist groups.

[The-Backlash-Against-Intl-Democracy-Unit-3-LP.pdf](#)

## **Unit 2**

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### **Unit Two: La Amistad In Their Own Words (60 mins)**

How did African people win their freedom in the Amistad case as opposed to being granted freedom?

Students will:

- Explore the key events and significance of the 1839 Amistad rebellion.

→ Describe the legal status of slavery in the U.S. in 1839 and the society into which the Amistad captives were taken.

→ Analyze primary source documents that reveal the voice and agency of the kidnapped African people. → Write a newspaper article exploring how the Amistad captives won their freedom.

[La-Amistad-In-Their-Own-Words-Lesson-Plans-Unit-2.pdf](#)

## **Unit 1**

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### **Unit One: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE: WHY IS IT AN ILLUSION? (60 mins)**

Is race real? What are the dangers of categorizing people using the concept of race?

Students will:

→Discuss the concept of “colorblindness” as a response to racism in our society.

→Explain why race is a social construct, with no basis in science.

→Examine the impact that categorizing people by race has had on humanity.

→Define the terms “race,” “racism” and “social construct.”

[The-Social-Construction-of-Race-Lesson-Plan-Unit-1.pdf](#)