

Grades 6-8 Lesson Plan for The Traveling American History Museum

Before the Museum Considerations

1. Who is in your classroom?
 - a. For teachers teaching in a predominantly Black¹ classroom be sure to inform your students about the traumatic images and artifacts from the enslavement and Jim Crow eras they will be viewing in the museum. Consider having a class discussion about what students need to make the museum a safe space to view the material together as a Black community.
 - b. For teachers teaching in a predominantly Non-Black classroom, if you do have Black students consider speaking to them and their families to inform them about the traumatic images and artifacts from the enslavement and Jim Crow eras they will be viewing in the museum. Also consider have a safe space for those students to go to if they would like to discuss any triggering images. Prepare your whole class with a discussion of how the museum will land differently for people of different races and what that means for what we say and how we act during the museum so we hold our classmates identities with care.
 - c. Finally, be sure to consider your own racial identity what preparation do you need to do to either prepare yourself for the museum or prepare yourself to hold your student identities with care?
 - i. If you identify as non Black: how do you identify ethnically? What biases have been uncovered that may be “triggered” as you personally review both the enslavement and Jim Crow sections?
2. Courageous Conversations

Before visiting the museum consider how you have prepared your students to have difficult conversations and talk across difference. Have you set up your classroom to be a [Brave Space](#) for these discussions? Consider taking 1-2 days to cultivate vulnerability and resilience. Here are some resources to help build student’s capacity for difficult conversations:

1. Book: *Courageous Conversations about Race* by Glenn Singleton
2. Book: *Not Light but Fire* by Matthew R. Kay
3. Ted Talk: [How I learned to stop worrying and love discussing race](#)
4. Ted Talk: [The Danger of a Single Story](#)

¹ Throughout this resource the term Black refers to all people of the African Diaspora

Lesson Timeline

- One-30minute portion of a Period
- Two- 50minute Class Periods

Objectives:

- Define Racism, Resilience, and Ingenuity
- Identify key historical events in American History of Racism, Resilience, and Ingenuity
- Explain how Black people have displayed Ingenuity throughout time
- Explain how Black people have responded to Racism and Resilience Throughout time
- Explain the power of learning beyond trauma

Language Objectives:

- Define Racism, Resilience and Ingenuity
- Discuss how Black people have displayed Ingenuity throughout time
- Discuss how Black people have responded to Racism and Resilience Throughout time
- Discuss the power of learning beyond trauma

Washington State Social Studies Standards:

H1.6-8.4 Analyze a major historical event and how it is represented on timelines from different cultural perspectives, including those of indigenous people.

H2.6-8.1 Explain and analyze how individuals, movements, cultural and ethnic groups, and technology from past civilizations have shaped world history.

H2.6-8.5 Explain and analyze how individuals and movements have shaped United States history (1763-1877). H2.6-8.6 Explain and analyze how cultures and cultural and ethnic groups have contributed to United States history (1763-1877). H2.6-8.7 Explain and analyze how technology and ideas have impacted United States history (1763-1877).

H3.6-8.5 Analyze multiple causal factors to create positions on major events in United States history (1763- 1877)

H4.6-8.1 Analyze how a historical event in world history helps us to understand contemporary issues and events.

H4.6-8.3 Analyze how a historical event in United States history helps us to understand contemporary issues and events.

SSS3.6-8.1 Engage in discussion, analyzing multiple viewpoints on public issues.

Lesson Prep Part I (Before the Museum)-Time: 30minutes

1. Explain to students that they will be attending the Traveling American History Museum: Unspoken Truths. Their job as they experience the museum is to identify examples of Black Ingenuity, Racism faced by Black people, and Resilience Black people have demonstrated throughout time.
2. Pass out the Traveling American History Museum Assignment sheet
3. Have students turn to Part 1
4. Have students search for and define the words Ingenuity, Racism, and Resilience and record the definitions on the assignment sheet. Here is what they should come up with from Merriam Webster Dictionary:
 - a. Ingenuity:
 - i. skill or cleverness that allows someone to solve problems, invent things, etc.
 - b. Racism:
 - i. a belief that [race](#) is a fundamental [determinant](#) of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race
 - ii. the [systemic](#) oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another
 - iii. a political or social system founded on racism and designed to execute its principles
 - c. Resilience
 - i. the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens
5. Working in small groups or pairs have students come up with historical examples for each term.
 - a. For the historical example of racism be sure students are providing an example of racism, not simply prejudice
6. Have students share their examples, clarifying any misconceptions along the way
7. Divide the class into 3 groups (or allow them to choose based on interest): Resilience, Ingenuity, Racism.
8. Have them turn to Part II of the assignment and tell them each group will be responsible for creating a timeline that tracks examples of these terms throughout the museum.

Lesson Day 1-Time: One-50minute Class Period

1. Consider having the different groups start in different places in the museum (for space and time)
2. As students move through the museum have them complete Part II of the assignment-35minutes
3. In the last 15 minutes have students form groups of three that contain one person from each of the topic groups. Together have them complete Part III of the Assignment. Tell them if they don't finish it is okay as they will have the beginning of class the next day to continue to work on Part III

Lesson Day 2-Time: One-50 minute Class Period

1. Have students rejoin their synthesis groups and finish Part III-15minutes
2. Display the class discussion questions and give students 10minutes to discuss in their small groups, tell them they will be having a class discussion so they should be prepared to share. If they need to write down their answers to feel prepared they should do so (some are repeats from Part III of the Assignment)-10minutes
3. Have students form a discussion circle and discuss the class discussion questions

- a. At the beginning of the museum Mr. Richardson always asks visitors “What is American History” at the end of the museum Mr. Richardson asks the same question. What was your answer before viewing the museum and what was your answer after viewing the museum?
 - b. Looking at the events/artifacts you identified for INGENUITY how have Black people displayed ingenuity throughout history?
 - c. Looking at the events/artifacts you identified for RACISM and RESILIENCE how have Black people demonstrated resilience when faced with racism throughout history?
 - d. Dr. Bettina Love in her book *We Want to Do More Than Survive* says that slavery is not Black history, it is white history. She goes on to say Black history is the holding on to African tradition, ingenuity, resistance, love, fighting for equality for all people. What does she mean by that? Why does this distinction matter (consider the Legacy of Slavery and Perseverance current event articles in your answer) Why is it important to know Black people through a lens other than enslavement? How does the museum prove her statement to be true?
 - e. One of the themes in US History is the Legacy of Enslavement Effects our Present. As you experience the exhibits what evidence of this theme do you see. Be as specific. In order to fully address this question, you cannot simply look at current day events but must connect the history to the current day events.
 - f. Mr. Richardson says his museum is the history of America and not just Black history. Why is this concept important, and what does that mean to us as individuals in this classroom?
 - g. What one thing will I do differently as a result of what I learned today so that I don’t perpetuate the unequal conditions created by America’s history of racism?
4. Discuss the class discussion questions-20minutes

Traveling American History Museum Assignment

Part I: Important Terms

Directions: Using the Dictionary, Define the following Terms:

1. Ingenuity is:

2. An Example of Ingenuity is:

3. Racism is:
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

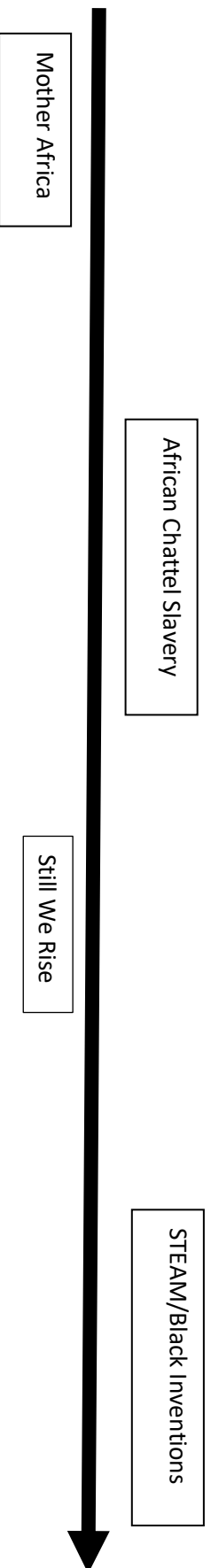
4. An Example of Racism is:

5. Resilience is:

6. An Example of Resilience is:

Part II: The Museum

1. Your job is to create a timeline of specific events or artifacts that display Black Ingenuity/Racism/Black Resilience (Circle your group's topic) in American History. On your timeline you need two events from each of the following sections that demonstrate your topic
 1. Mother Africa
 2. American Chattel Slavery
 3. Still We Rise
 4. STEAM/Black Inventions and Black Inventors



Part III: Synthesis

1. Form a group of three that contains someone from each of the three topic groups: Ingenuity, Racism, and Resilience
2. Share the items from your timeline explaining why it is an example of your topic.
3. Looking at the events/artifacts you identified for **INGENUITY** how have Black people displayed ingenuity throughout history?

4. Looking at the events/artifacts you identified for **RACISM** and **RESILIENCE** how have Black people demonstrated resilience when faced with racism throughout history?

5. One of the themes in US History is the Legacy of Enslavement Effects our Present. As you experience the exhibits what evidence of this theme do you see. Be as specific. In order to fully address this question, you cannot simply look at current day events but must connect the history to the current day events.

6. What one thing will I do differently as a result of what I learned today so that I don't perpetuate the unequal conditions created by America's history of racism?