

# Justice By the Pen Curriculum Map

*Who are you? Where did you come from? Why are you here?*

## Unit 1- The Struggle for Identity

- Overarching Ideas**
1. Discovering that society, economy, politics, and nature (race/class) affect who we are and what actions we decide to take.
  2. Creating a safe space and sense of community is necessary for this year to be productive.

**Essential Questions** Who are you? Where did you come from? Why are you here?  
What factors make you who you are? Who am I in relation to my community, country, world?

- Standards**
1. I can deconstruct the components that make up my identity and identify the factors that contribute to the construction of my identity.
  2. I can recognize the importance of respect for myself and others through role-playing exercises.
  3. I can live my life with dignity by applying the idea that every person is valuable and “worth it” to my daily actions.
  4. I can create and adhere to community guidelines that create a safe space with no judgments.

- Sources**
1. The Boondocks (TV Show)
  2. Teachable Moments – 1<sup>st</sup> week getting to know each other exercises

3. Malcolm X “Who are You” clip
4. Gandhi Movie
5. Other Films

**Case Studies** The Boondocks episode

**Lesson Activities**

1. Partner A and partner B have to speak for 1 minute answering each of the four questions: Who are you? What factors contributed to who you are? How did you get here today? How did you get here from the day you were born?
2. “I am” (adjectives) poem
3. Questions about why we are sitting in the room a particular way, why they assume I’m the authority figure, etc.
4. Explain the outline of this course: we are going to discover who we are in relation to our community by studying the factors that influence our actions. Then we will figure out how to resist those things we do not like about our community/society through non-violent creative means.
5. “Who are you” Malcolm X Clip
6. “I trust you” activity
7. Human knot
8. Pairs lifting themselves up with linked arms
9. Musical chairs

10. Identity maps/webs

11. <http://www.teachablemoment.org/images/knowyou.pdf>

12. Having everyone list all the parts that create identities/communities and chart it up on board. Then categorize them into the 4 categories.

13. Have kids watch boondocks episode and analyze all the identities displayed in the show. (pre-evaluation)

14. Big paper answering each of these questions: “what is the biggest problem in our daily lives? , etc (lesson #4)

**Resistance Skill**

Starts from Unit 2

**Project Ideas**

1. Answer these questions to get kids to think about the types of projects possible after they finish the course. Ask them the same questions at the end of the course to measure growth.

1) What are the biggest problems in our daily lives?

2) Where do these problems come from?

3) Who has the power to make the decisions that affect our lives?

4) How can I express/stand up for my beliefs?

5) Where/how can I give back to my community?

6) What community service/social justice project do I want to work on?

**Field Trip/ Guest Speaker**

Walk around your neighborhood and bring back 10 free souvenirs from different places (a flyer, utensil, garbage etc.) each artifact must come with a story of how it represents a part

of the community.

## **Unit 2-Culture/Family/ Socialization**

- Overarching Ideas**
1. Cultures are not good or bad, just different.
  2. Cultures bring people together.
  3. Cultures reflect values.
  4. My health and the types of relationships I have are influenced by culture.
  5. My family and their ancestors pass down attributes that I accept as norms.

- Essential Questions**
- How does society and family influence who we are?
- How is having loving relationships and treating my body with respect a form of resistance in itself.

- Standards**
1. *Socialization*
    - a. I can investigate the nature of subjectivity and confirm that the vast majority of my perspectives, likes, and dislikes are products of socialization.
    - b. I can question the validity of violence by analyzing the role the media plays in glorifying violence.
  2. *Globalized Family*
    - a. I can investigate the life histories of my parents and grandparents (or other older family members/guardians) by highlighting the struggles of their forefathers and the traits that have been inadvertently passed down to me through their

experiences.

b. I can debate whether globalization has had a more positive or negative influence on me (and the world) by analyzing the repercussions and benefits of the increase in cultural communication/interaction (internet/twitter/planes, etc.)

### *3. Relationships*

a. I can describe the characteristics of a good friend and display good friendship skills.

b. I can identify a healthy, loving relationship and compare it to unhealthy, abusive and destructive relationships.

c. I can analyze the role of sex in relationships through a cultural lens.

d. I can explore the components that go into choosing the person I want to marry (or explore if I even desire engaging in that social construct) and understand the responsibility that comes along with a life partnership. I deserve not to settle.

### *4. Health*

a. I can define a holistic healthy lifestyle (sleep, exercise, spirituality, shelter, food) through analyzing Maslow's hierarchy and set achievable goals as to how to implement these in my life.

b. I can identify the importance of fitness in my life and make an individualized plan to build healthy physical habits.

c. I can create strategies for avoiding substance abuse like alcohol, drugs, and sex, and understand why these drugs are detrimental to one's health.

d. I can question the obsession with physical appearance by studying the place of hair, body image, shaving, make up and skin color in society.

e. I can understand the effects of puberty and sexuality on my body/ actions and identify healthy vs. destructive ways of

expressing it.

## **Sources**

Map powerpoint, "Culturally Abnormal" powerpoint,

## **Case Studies**

1. Sports and entertainment. How do valuing these professions as an end itself rather than a means to an end in our society affect our values?
2. Immigration. How do borders and the labeling of "legal and illegal" or "immigrant" vs. "native" affect who we are?
3. Blogs on food justice, articles, etc.

## **Lesson Activities (Teacher Notes)**

1. Try food from different cultures. Talk about norms, how we eat, what we eat (powerpoint)
2. Map activity- walk around community drawing a map from "their perspective"
3. Show them the Mercator, Peter's projection and upside down world map. Talk about where each kid came from.
4. Discuss where everything they consider "normal" comes from (collars, long hair, etc.)
5. Go to Grand Central ask random people questions from the "Where do you come from" survey
6. Activity where we stand in front of each other and take steps forward (talk about personal space norms).
7. Put two words on the board (Parent and Marriage) have them shout out the first thing that comes to their mind. Discuss how past experiences affect our interpretation of present.
8. Hugging, shaking hands, staring circle game.
9. Game where you have a dream, and partner encourages you, discourages you, and then ignores

you.

10. What is a clique? (have kids fill out survey).

**Resistance Skill**

1. Personal Education
2. Debate/Discussion
3. Role-modeling
4. Writing

**Project Ideas**

Asthma, diabetes, food justice, mental health

**Field Trip/ Guest  
Speaker**

Grand Central, Mara Gay (on food blogging), Alicia McWilliams  
(HIV AIDS education)

## Unit 3: The Natural World

**Overarching Ideas**

1. You are part of your environment.
2. Some things you have power over, and some things you don't.
3. Gender roles/race is constructed/ reflected.
4. Our niche as humans placed in a particular geography, dealing with specific environmental issues (global warming) and taking a specific place in the food chain (in relation to other animals) all affect our identity and actions.

**Essential Questions** To what extent do the bodies we are born with dictate our ability? To what extent do we have control over our actions? How does nature affect who we are? What aspects of our identities are actually nature and which are nurture? How do gender, race and privilege affect who we are? How does the natural world affect who we are? How is gaining consciousness of one's privilege activism in itself? How is understanding which parts of ourselves are driven by nature and which parts of ourselves are driven by socialization a form of struggle in itself?

## **Standards**

### *1. Gender*

- a. I can differentiate between sex, gender and sexual orientation and break down stereotypes of what it means to be man or woman.
- b. I can map the intersection between violence and masculinity and how the media influences men's susceptibility to violence.
- c. I can deconstruct the porn industry and analyze the harm that it causes society through the objectification of women.

### *2. Race/Ethnicity/Indigenous Identity*

- a. I can analyze race as a social construct through learning about the Rwandan Genocide and the Holocaust and question the context in which people are able to participate in these acts.
- b. I can explore the role media plays in perpetuating and reflecting racial stereotypes.
- c. I can describe the eugenics movement and identify the ways this movement created psyches of superiority and inferiority.
- d. I can identify medical experiments in the history of the US and Europe that took advantage of marginalized communities'



bodies with specific focus on the Tuskegee syphilis experiment and experiments conducted during Nazi Germany.

e. I can examine how the pilgrims first settled in North America seeking religious freedoms and examine how often the oppressed becomes the oppressor.

### *3. Entitlement/Ego*

a. Students will analyze white privilege, male privilege, and reflect on how these privileges benefit particular people on a daily basis.

b. I can study the super ego, ego and id and the role the ego plays in escalating conflict.

### *4. Nature*

a. I can reflect on how my identity and actions are connected to my niche on this earth in relation to my environment and other living things.

b. I can debate the pros and cons of science through looking at abortion, genetic engineering, medicine, and evolution (and how it is applied to social evolution: The Bell Curve).

c. I can analyze the relationship between humans and their environment and outline different ways to live in a harmonious, sustainable manner.

d. I can formulate a relationship and appreciation for nature by confirming the role the outdoors plays in our mental wellbeing.

e. I can discover where my food comes from, how animals are treated in the US food industry, and how this affects our wellbeing.

### **Sources**

1. Food Inc.
2. Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian (Sherman Alexie)
3. Planet of the Arabs

4. Bamboozled
5. Beyond Beats and Rhymes
6. Crash

- Case Studies**
1. Pamphlets: “Know Your Rights”
  2. Ethan’s cartoons, Emily’s Palestine art, the Mural Project
  3. THAW, Arna’s Children, Alvin Ailey, Adalah NY dances.

- Lesson Activities**
1. Show “Planet of the Arabs”, “Bamboozled”,
  2. “What does it mean to be a man?” lesson (#2)
  3. Put different racial groups in front of the room and have the rest of the class shout out stereotypes they have about that particular group (write it on the board). Have the students in front of the room then reflect on their feelings.
  4. Stereotype Label activity (putting labels on foreheads and treating each other based on that quality).
  5. Inwood Park
  6. Animal abuse video clips.
  7. Andy Stephanian talking about animal testing company.
  8. Beyond Beats and Rhymes
  9. Privilege Walk
  10. La Finca del Sur trip
  11. Organic farmers market
  12. Vegan restaurant taste testing.

- Resistance Skill**
1. Prayer/Meditation/Reflection
  2. Raising Awareness (Connecting People with Resources)
  3. Visual Arts
  4. Movement Arts (Dance/Theater)

**Project Ideas** Food Justice (organic farms), animal rights, violence against women, teaching tolerance, stopping global warming, preserving nature (recycling).

- Field Trip/ Guest Speaker**
1. Andy Stefanian
  2. Organic market
  3. Vegan restaurant
  4. Farm: La Finca Del Sur
  5. Inwood Park
  6. Queen Afua or Bailey Rollins

## **Unit 4: Economics/Class/Access to Resources**

- Overarching Ideas**
1. Economics explains a lot, but not everything.
  2. You play a part in global economic/power dynamics.
  3. The material things you buy or desire drives identity and actions.

**Essential Questions** What influence does class have on my identity? How can I step outside the material world? Do I even want to? How can we

balance/redistribute wealth/ access to basic needs like food, shelter, etc.? Is class based on individual actions, or on structural inequalities? Is our attachment to material goods a form of modern day slavery?

**Standards** 1. *Poverty*

a. I can discuss why people go hungry, read overviews of what three organizations are doing to fight world hunger, and create my own solutions for combating world hunger.

b. I can reflect on what it is like to be homeless in NYC and research the options available to homeless people in the city.

c. I can compare and contrast the different housing options in NYC: Homeless shelters, group homes, half-way houses, public housing, private housing, etc.

d. I can recognize the importance of education and defend knowledge as a tool and gift of power.

2. *Systems of Oppression*

a. I can explore power by reflecting on how it plays out in education/knowledge (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) and physical control of bodies (Discipline and Punish).

b. I can study the Jim Crow Laws and analyze how the effects of these laws have trickled down into today's society by creating a cycle of inequality.

c. I can compare and contrast the Jim Crow Laws to apartheid South Africa (Group Areas Act) and present-day America.

3. *Modern Day Slavery*

a. I can critique sweatshop labor and debate whether it is a form of modern day slavery.

b. I can deconstruct my attachments to material objects such as clothes, electronics, houses, and cars, and imagine a lifestyle free of attachments by questioning what these material

possessions replace and why they make us happy (advertising).

c. I can question my attachment to money and compare capitalist and socialist understandings of wealth distribution.

**Sources** Paolo Frere's "Discipline and Punish" and "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"

**Case Studies**

1. Grameen Bank
2. Democracy Now!
3. BDS in Palestine

**Lesson Activities**

1. Occupy Wall street
2. Divide and Conquer (how to split an orange)

**Resistance Skill**

1. Volunteering and Organizing
2. Media
3. Boycott

**Project Ideas** Homeless shelter, soup kitchen, job training, resume assistance, international development.

**Field Trip/ Guest Speaker** Bassam Sultan (Advertising), Wall Street, Democracy Now!, Adalah NY member, Downtown Mission Homeless shelter, soup kitchen, People's Credit Union community bank.

## Unit 5: Politics/Law/Nation

- Overarching Ideas**
1. Law occurs at many levels.
  2. Laws and politics: blessings or curse?
  3. Are there winners and losers, or also compromises?

- Essential Questions**
1. How does the government/law affect who we are?
  2. Is it a given that once one gains power, they abuse it?
  3. Who am I as a global citizen?
  4. Does my freedom in America affect the freedom of people in other parts of the world?
  5. How can we resist this?
  6. How can we think of justice differently?
  7. What is “popular struggle”?
  8. Is forgiveness and reconciliation a “copout”?

**Standards** *1. International Power Dynamics*

- a. I can define the word “colonization” and study its effects on one group of people. Case study options: South Asia, Hawaii, DR Congo, South Africa, Honduras, Chile, Tanzania, Jordan, Puerto Rico.
- b. I can study the abuse of law by considering the relationship between the US and Mexico (the US’s annexation of California and the South West from Mexico, including Texas).
- c. I can recognize how the development industry is a form of neocolonialism by studying the effects of the World Bank, USAID and Peace Corps on “third world” countries.

## *2. Recognizing Indigenous and Enslaved People's Struggles*

- a. I can recognize the place Native Americans have in our society and how this is connected to the history of ethnic cleansing the indigenous community faced since before the foundation of the USA.
- b. I can explore the place slavery has played in the construction of our nation and how the aftermath of slavery has affected our society today (educational/neighborhood segregation, prison, disparities in wealth, etc.)
- c. I can outline the various versions of Palestine's history and debate solutions to come up with a just resolution.

## *3. Popular Struggle: Violence or Non-violence?*

- a. I can study the Just War Doctrine and analyze when I think violence is acceptable.
- b. I can evaluate the effectiveness of the struggle for equality in my own country by exploring the civil rights movement and analyzing the diverse tactics used to resist (focus on Malcolm X's work versus MLK's work).
- c. I can study the independence movement in India by reading Gandhi's Satiyagraha and analyze the place active resistance has in creating effective change.

## *4 Restorative Justice vs. Retributive Justice*

- a. can outline the history of the US prison system and connect the links between slavery and the criminal justice system through reading excerpts from "Are Prison's Obsolete?" by Angela Davis.
- b. I can define restorative justice and see it in action by visiting

a mediation center.

c. I can compare models of retributive justice to restorative justice and question whether our legal system encourages conflict (for financial gain and the creation of legal jobs) rather than trying to solve conflict.

d. I can investigate the application of restorative justice to larger government systems by studying the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in SA (Long Night's Journey into Day) and focus on the role of forgiveness and honesty in healing both "perpetrators" and "victims" of a conflict.

**Sources** Long Night's Journey into Day, "Are Prisons Obsolete" by Angela Davis

- Case Studies**
1. Invincible, Rebel Diaz, Most DEF, Bryon Bain.
  2. Palestine non-violent disobedience.
  3. Egyptian revolution/Civil Rights Movement- what strategies led to success? How did these popular movements lead to policy changes?
  4. South African TRC and American Prison System.

- Lesson Activities**
1. Native American Museum
  2. Multiple perspectives of same event (Columbus day/thanksgiving)
  3. Red and Black game ( life can be win-win instead of win-lose)
  4. Restorative justice circle to mediate a conflict with talking stick.



5. What is Power?" lesson (#4)
6. Restorative justice scenarios (Students come up with restorative solutions to different crime-scenarios) (lesson #8)

**Resistance Skill**

1. Fundraising/ Music
3. Documentaries
4. Protest/Uprising/Civil Disobedience
5. Connecting People (mediation/conflict resolution)/ lobbying (go to Albany to meet with reps, write letters, call representatives, go to City Hall Meetings once a month)

**Project Ideas** Helping prisoners, organizing/attending protests, indigenous struggles, USAID/World Bank protest, Palestinian land /water rights, segregation (in education).

**Field Trip/ Guest Speaker** 7<sup>th</sup> Generation Elders, Existence is Resistance speaker, Rebel Diaz, VERA Institute, Drop the Rock Correctional Association of NY

## Unit 6: Re-locating Myself in my Community

**Overarching Ideas**

1. Ubuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu; A Person is a Person because of Other People
2. You are part of something bigger than yourself, and so it is your responsibility to give back/take care of your community.

**Essential Questions** 1. Now that I know myself, who am I in my community?

2. Now that I know the forces that shape me and the people around me, how do I change the forces that I do not like?

- Standards**
1. I can now embrace intersecting/multiple identities and find a niche as a person coming from a particular community living in America.
  2. I can define community as more than a geographical, racial, ethnic or religious category.
  3. I can figure out the most important thing that I want to do for my community.
  4. I can conduct a month long independent study project or volunteer internship project where I choose my own topic of interest and apply what I learned to my work.
  5. I can revisit The Boondocks and reanalyze the episode with the new knowledge I have.
  6. I can revisit the 6 questions I answered in the first unit and see how much I have grown through the new depth of my answers.
  7. I can present and answer questions about my month-long project at an end of the program evaluation of my work with confidence and competency.

**Sources** Dependent on the IP (Independent Project)

**Case Studies** Dependent on the IP

**Lesson Activities** 1. "What do you want!" game

2. What is the difference between charity and justice?

**Resistance Skill** Your choice!

**Project Ideas** Your choice!

**Field Trip/ Guest  
Speaker** Depends on your volunteer site.