

Reading Resource Library

Civil Rights Resource: Text Set Exploration

The [Reading Resource Library](#) is a tool created for educators to share with learners and is filled with topically relevant, educational, and captivating books for readers of all ages and levels. The books are sorted into sixteen different topics that can be explored with learners and their families.

The following high interest books were selected to support an exploration of the Civil Rights movement. Each book has a summary and additional information, such as book trailers and links to reviews, in a separate slide deck. Visit [this link](#) to explore the books.

Overall Suggestions for Using the Texts and Slide Deck:

- Explore the books in the collection and note they span different reading levels. Also included is a separate collection, “**Engaging Books for Children and Families,**” which offers a selection of books that can be used with children, families, and adults.
- Explore the slides in the provided link. Each book listed in the table below has a summary and additional information with links to websites that offer supplemental material. Consider selecting one book to read aloud to your learners while they read their own text.
- Share the slide deck with learners and explore the books and websites. Allow learners individual time to explore the slide deck and choose a book or excerpts from several books to read.
- Use this tool to help develop and foster a reading life for your learners!

Book Title	Author	Lexile Reading Level
<i>X: A Novel</i>	Ilyasah Shabazz	580
<i>The Hate U Give</i>	Angie Thomas	590
<i>Dear Martin</i>	Nic Stone	720
<i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March</i>	Lynda Blackmon Lowery	780
<i>Brown Girl Dreaming</i>	Jacqueline Woodson	990
<i>I've Seen the Promised Land: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.</i>	Walter Dean Myers	1010
<i>Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement</i>	John Lewis, Michael D'Orso	1050
Engaging Books for Adults and Children		
<i>Viola Desmond Won't Be Budged!</i>	Jody Nyasha Warner	640
<i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i>	Robert Coles	730
<i>Josephine: The Dazzling Life of Josephine Baker</i>	Patricia Hruby Powell	790
<i>Rosa</i>	Nikki Giovanni	800
<i>Child of the Civil Rights Movement</i>	Paula Young Shelton	840

Civil Rights Text Set Exploration

The following activities were designed for a short Civil Rights exploration with learners. When you use these activities, please consider desired learner outcomes, key vocabulary terms, incorporating relevant material based on learners' interests, and any differentiation/modifications needs.

- Materials were developed to allow for instructor customization based on their program's standards and learning objectives. Instructors should modify and format lessons, activities, and assessments (formative and summative) based on the needs of their learners and desired outcomes.
- Consider readability of texts and offer modifications as needed – graphic/thought organizers, groupings, visual aids, read alouds, chunking text strategies, pre-reading/activation strategies, etc. Learners may struggle with reflecting without prompts, so offer prompts and lead ins when necessary.
- Review resources for working with adult learners:
 - [Adult Learning Theory](#)
 - [Adult Learner Strategies](#)
 - [Authentic Audiences & Purposes](#)
 - [Cultural & Life Experiences Connections](#)
 - [Learner Variability](#)
- To plan a more detailed lesson or unit, view our [Reading Resource Library](#) [Instructor Planning Materials](#).

Texts and Excerpts to Consider

Text excerpts are a great way to expose learners to multiple texts, focus on specific literary elements, and foster a love of reading. This idea is explored in this [NEA](#) advice piece. For this unit, consider selecting texts, excerpts, and activities about Civil Rights that will allow learners to transfer skills to real life experiences.

If you do not have time to review texts and select excerpts, consider these online resources:

- [This is My America](#)
- [American Street](#)
- [Stamped](#)
- [Walking With the Wind](#)
- [Brown Girl Dreaming](#)
- [Viola Desmond Won't Be Budged!](#)

Vocabulary - Key Terms to Explore

To help learners better understand and explore the Civil Rights topic and selected excerpts, pre-teach a few key vocabulary words. There are several key words to explore, this is a short list to choose from:

- Discrimination
- Bias (implicit and explicit)
- Racism

- Identity
- Segregation
- Prejudice
- Oppression
- Democracy
- Freedom
- Human Rights
- Identity
- Social Movements

Vocabulary activities to consider:

- **The Frayer Model:** Have learners write the vocabulary term in the middle of four boxes. Then, ask them to write the definition, the word in a sentence, synonyms and antonyms, and a visual representation of the word in one of the boxes. (Each box will be its own category).
- **Semantic Mapping:** Ask learners to create a semantic map showing the relationship between the words (after you have taught them the definitions and given them some context). Semantic maps can be created online or by hand in personal notebooks. They are a great way for learners to visualize and engage in conceptual thinking!
- **Vocabulary Paint Chips:** Ask learners to think of other “shades of meaning” with this fun activity. Grab some colorful paint strips from any local hardware store, or any store where you can buy paint. Ask them to list the vocabulary term on the bottom and move up the paint strip with other meanings or contexts of the term.

Pre-Reading Activity

Pre-reading activities play a vital role in learners’ comprehension of text and retainment of learning. These activities can also improve cognitive development, increase vocabulary, boost memory, and enhance focus. Before you explore the texts together, consider a kickoff activity to encourage learners to think about their own identities and what has shaped their passions and the things they care most about. Show learners this [TED Talk](#), which explores our role in creating the American identity.

Explore these prompts with learners – either through conversation or written reflection activities:

- **Identify** what factors shaped the speaker’s identity?
- **Summarize and compare** what factors in your life have shaped your identity?
- **Articulate and determine** what is the speaker’s overall message?
- **Reflect on** what the speaker said that resonated with you the most? Why?
- **Examine** what lessons you have learned about your own identity?

As learners read, come back to the question of identity and factors that influence it with the people and characters in the texts that they are reading about. You may want to draft 1-2 guiding (essential) questions for your study.

As an additional activity, consider having learners go through [this lesson](#) to connect what they are reading and learning about to the idea of cultural identity.

After learners have read through the text excerpts, consider having them create an [identity chart](#) for one of the people or characters they read about or themselves.

Exploring with Text Sets

The following activities are reading and/or annotation activities learners can use. These strategies will help learners read for purpose and meaning, organize their thinking, conceptualize their learning, and build their overall comprehension. Each activity provides a hyperlink for more information about the specific literacy strategy.

As learners read, encourage “active” reading with any of the following:

- **Post-It Response Notes:** Ask learners to track their questions, thoughts, quotes, points of confusion, important information, or connections on Post-It notes as they read. Provide starters if needed:
 - “The author wrote/stated/shared...”
 - “I understand this because...”
 - “On page ___, it stated...”
 - “One detail...”
 - “This piece of text helps readers understand...”
- **3 Reads Protocol:** Ask learners to read the excerpt three times, each time with a specific purpose. For example, the first time might be to read for comprehension, the second may be to read for analysis, and the third read may be to make connections. Find out more about this strategy [here](#).
- **Collaborative Annotations:** Ask learners to read each other’s reading notes. Encourage them to write a question and a response, or reflection, to their classmates’ annotations. (It works best if each learner uses a different color font when writing annotations.)
- **Sketchnoting:** Ask learners to draw visual representations for their notes as they read the excerpts. This is a great way for them (and you) to visually track their thinking and make connections. For more information on this strategy, click [here](#).

Exploring with Images

Consider viewing images and captions from the Civil Rights era with your learners. There are many sites that have images and visual activities. Search *civil rights images to teach with* to explore sites/images that work best for your learners! You might explore these:

- [National Archives](#)
- [CNN The Civil Rights Movement in Pictures](#)
- [ABC News The Civil Rights Era in Photos](#)
- [Civil Rights Movements in Pictures](#)

Share your selected images with learners. If possible, print the images and create a “text” gallery walk. Place the image in the center of a large piece of paper. Have learners circulate and respond to the image with responses, questions, images, etc. This site explores the use of [Graffiti Boards](#). In addition to graffiti boards, you might extend the gallery walk into a written reflection activity.

Reflective Writing

Class time should offer writing reflection time. Allow learners to free write but offer optional prompts for those needing support. Optional prompts:

- What is my cultural identity and why does that matter for my education or career?
- How do culture and identity shape society? Where have we seen this throughout history?
- “How might you, as an adult learner, apply what you have learned in some aspect of your life – work, home, community, etc.?”

In their writing reflections, encourage learners to identify a big idea or takeaway, a theme, similarities and differences between what they are learning and their own life, and how they can relate to something they have encountered.

Written Conversations allow for the class as a whole to be “talking at once” just silently. Introduce a topic of conversation from the readings and/or class discussions. Develop the topic based on class conversations or offer a prompt, such as “What are the people, places, and events, that have shaped my world?”

1. Pair up learners so that they are sitting across from each other. (If learning online, they will create documents that can be “shared.”)
2. All learners will respond to the prompt individually; provide them with 4-5 minutes of silent writing time. Encourage learners to free write – ideas, thoughts, questions. (Encourage them to not worry about spelling, sentence structure, etc.) They should let their ideas flow, knowing they will share their writings/ideas/questions with their partner. This activity may be tricky because they may want to share their writing in the moment – encourage them to silent write!
3. After the 4-5 minutes are up, have partners swap papers or “share” their online documents.
4. Allow them 2-3 minutes to read and respond in writing to their partner, without talking. They will silently read their partner’s writing and respond in writing – on the same paper or document. In their writing, encourage them to ask questions, make connections, and introduce new ideas.
5. Continue switching and writing (conversing) a few more times, always *silently* and following the *outline* in step 4.
6. After at least four exchanges, have partners stop and finally TALK! (If conducting this through online learning, use breakout rooms.) *If the class has not participated in a written conversation before, expect this to be challenging the first time. They will naturally want to talk to each other every time they exchange papers. Encourage the whole process to be silent. When they finally get to talk to one another, the conversation is usually very animated and rich!
7. Conduct a whole class report out from the conversations. Ask for pairs to share any highlights, questions, and new understandings and discuss any common patterns in the conversation. Teachable moment – discuss/point out that the class is synthesizing their ideas on the topic.
8. Modify this activity as needed for learners – expanding writing time if needed. Perhaps they might draw/sketch their thoughts, write in “texting” format, or begin by exchanging texts if in a virtual setting. Consider pairing learners to write together and then engage in a written conversation with another pair. It’s important to be thoughtful during this activity and consider learners’ needs as writing on demand may be challenging.

Additional Resources

- [Visit our Reading Resource Library for more Civil Rights Instructor Resources](#)
- [Reading Resource Library Instructor Planning Materials](#)
- [Anti-Racist and Anti-Bias Teaching Resources](#)
- [Three Black Women of Literacy – Unit of Study](#)
- [Diversity Toolkit for Instructors](#)