



THE KNOTTED LINE

Waves of

The History
of the
United States

ere

The Knotted Line Curriculum Guide

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THE KNOTTED LINE

“The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is ‘knowing thyself’ as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. Therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory.”

**Antonio Gramsci,
Prison Notebooks (1929-1935)**

The Background

The seed for The Knotted Line was planted in 2007 while working at a public high school in East Oakland. That year, I had conversations with students about incarcerated family members and watched as disciplinary attempts to ‘kick kids out of class,’ suspension and expulsion removed students from their school community only to deepen conflict. I began to reflect more deeply on how the prison industrial complex (PIC) was not only responsible for control and surveillance of over 7 million people, but that it has deep historical roots and presence in many institutions, including public education. As a result, I began working with incarcerated men, youth, and their family members, trying to look critically at the prison industrial complex through

pedagogical structures that attempted to disembody the PIC’s conceptual roots.

During one project, *What Cannot Be Taken Away*, I drew a recent history of the prison industrial complex on butcher paper and invited participants to add their own stories to the timeline. The exercise connected the often stigmatized and isolated personal stories of incarceration with larger systemic forces and historical context.

When we exhibited the final portraits from that project, my friend Tanya Orellana and I expanded on this initial research, looking at the historical roots of the PIC beginning in 1493. We also added liberatory futures up to 2025—essentially the imagined full implementation of work currently being done. As before, the timeline provided a historical and



systemic frame to contextualize individual stories. In looking at the historical roots, we expanded the central organizing theme to the relationship of freedom and confinement.

In the context of “the Land of the Free,” the timeline argued that freedom has always been a central element of the U.S. national narrative. But, most importantly, freedom is only understandable in the context of how it defines and confines those who do not have access to freedom. “Freedom,” in this sense, is reliant on the “other” being entrapped in and targeted by the major carceral mechanisms throughout U.S. history: chattel slavery, manifest destiny, colonization, reservations, immigration, ghettos, non-citizenship and the prison industrial complex. There is another story, however, that also needed to be included: the thread of liberatory movements that have simultaneously sought to reimagine freedom and struggle for self-determination. The addition of the liberatory histories, the paintings, and the online format formed *The Knotted Line*, a two-year undertaking with programming and design by Erik Loyer, additional research by Lisa Nowlain and additional concept design by Josh Begley.

The Knotted Line Curriculum Guide has been shaped through collaborations with an amazing group of educators and participants who made the material relevant to their own lives and interests. Alykhan Boolani, Fatima Ghatala and Marguerite Sheffer were the first to attempt a four-week project using the website and their conceptual input has shaped much of what followed. Liza Gesuden opened up the possibility of using creative writing and literature through the amazing project with Octavia Butler’s *Kindred*. Former high school teachers of mine—Augusto Andres, David Tarpinian and David Rice—invited me back to my old high school, which led to the outcomes in the *Flipping the Script* Project. Professor Victoria Robinson offered the first opportunity for a college-level collaboration at UC Berkeley. Josh Perlman helped form an early middle school integration through the *We the People?* workshop while Josh Healey created the *Timeline of Resistance* in a youth organizing setting. Numerous other workshops, presentation and exhibitions—at the Brecht Forum, Alcatraz Island, the Allied Media Conference,

Detroit Future Schools, USC, UCSC, USF, San Francisco Juvenile Hall, with California Coalition of Women Prisoners, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and many more—have produced new insights and adaptations in each instance. A number of other people gave feedback and insight including Sarah Gonzales and Naomi Gordon-Loebl. In addition, the curriculum draws from numerous existing workshops and toolkits including *Hurricane Season*, *Critical Resistance*, the Chicago Anti-PIC collective, Theater of the Oppressed and many others of whom I am likely not even aware. We made a sincere effort to note these connections throughout the guide. Christopher Garcia Abueg’s design is a visual mirror to the pedagogy at the core of this project while also making it a pleasure to use. Finally, Ora Wise has worked tirelessly on the final curriculum design, bringing flow, adaptability, and incredible insight to the process.

From the beginning, the Panta Rhea foundation has supported the vision of *The Knotted Line*. It is their incredibly generous support and dedication to the work which makes this guide possible.

Guiding Concepts

The Knotted Line curriculum offers four major, interconnected concepts for engaging with history as a way of making sense of the present:

1 *The shifting line of free/not-free is one of the main organizing factors of social hierarchy in the United States and manifests through race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship, disability, nationality, and political activity. Different mechanisms throughout history enforce this “line.”*

2 At any given historical moment, there are multiple forces at play and multiple outcomes that could have occurred—*historical conjuncture*. *The Knotted Line* highlights the dialectic of liberatory movements and actions, and oppressive forces. This allows for a constant reimagining of what could happen and an analysis of what did happen and why.



3. The Knotted Line emphasizes a *transhistorical* approach. Through comparing and relating historical events, new understandings can be gained about the conceptual relationship between historical moments and forces. In The Knotted Line, this is expressed as the X-Y Axis and is a core concept throughout the curriculum.

4. History is an active and contested creation that impacts how we live in the present and the possibilities we allow ourselves to imagine for the future. Anyone can add to, create, manipulate, and transform historical narratives through the use of media. Inspired by the work of Grace Lee Boggs, Paolo Freire and Antonio Gramsci, *we are creating and created by these histories simultaneously.*

Ready-to-use, Ready-to-remix

The Knotted Line Curriculum is ready-to-use; it contains project outlines, suggested workshop sequences, variable timeframes, worksheets, videos, slideshows and Common Core standards for high school. In instances of limited access to computers there are PDF versions available of the paintings and slide-shows, though inevitably some of the concept is lost in print. If working with devices without Flash, there is a mobile version of the website available at knottedline.com.

With that said, we offer this guide with the hope that you will remix, sample, critique, and grow it. As educators we are constant improvisers but our intention was to prepare a fertile ground from which to begin. The workshops themselves are organized in a suggested sequence that builds on language and concepts introduced in previous workshops, but many of them were developed as and continue to be used on their own. We chose not to offer a one-hour workshop option due to the complicated nature of the material. But, if that is all the time you have, we recommend playing with the website, responding to the questions and treating it as a bit of a scavenger hunt. For a quick introduction, you can view this [3 minute video](#).

Cycle of Learning How the workshops are organized

Workshops are organized into a four-part cycle that spans two 55-minute sessions.

Using this structure adapted from the 4MAT learning cycle, each workshop goes through activities designed to lead participants through the following stages:

- 1 Personal Connection & Reflection, Developing the Reason to Learn
- 2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical
- 3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts
- 4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

The cycle of learning provides a structure in which all learning styles are valued and engaged with. The different stages give learners opportunities to shine where they feel confident and learn from their peers when they feel stretched.

Exhibition, Professional Development, & Integration

Finally, if you would like to work with this further in any way, we offer exhibitions, trainings, professional development, and consulting work.

Thank you and be in touch—we'd love to hear about highlights, challenges, and the work that gets created with The Knotted Line.

knottedline.com@gmail.com



Defining Power

Developing Language

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Power is everywhere and comes from everywhere. It can't be simplified to a specific agency, structure, person or peoples—although all of these uphold or challenge power in different ways.

Power is constantly shifting and being negotiated.

Power can lift people up or keep them down.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is power?

Are there different kinds of power?

How does power operate in your life?

GOALS

Participants will strengthen/develop their ability to identify different kinds of power and how it works in the world around them.

Participants will become familiar with and begin to apply specific concepts, methods and tools for understanding and engaging with power.

Participants will develop a shared language with which to articulate experiences, ideas, and issues in their own lives and connect them to larger society.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Read [Democratic Process & the Theater of the Oppressed](#)
- Read [Analyze Power](#)

MATERIALS

- markers
- glue or tape
- Five (non-rolling) chairs or five of another object
- [Power Word list](#)
- [Power Words Images](#) packet
- [Power in the World](#) worksheet
- [Power Assignment](#)
- prepped Power Word flipchart papers for small groups

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Print [Power Word list](#) and [Power Assignment](#) for each participant.
- Write up power definition (see Wrap Up activity below).

1 Personal Connection & Reflection, Developing the Reason to Learn

Columbian Hypnosis

10 MIN

The facilitator describes the ice-breaker activity: Everyone is going to find a partner. One partner is the leader, the other is the follower. Don't worry—you're going to switch! So let's set ourselves up for this. In the next 30 seconds, find a partner and then in the next 30 seconds after that, decide together who will be the leader first. Then stand facing each other.

At this point, the facilitator gives participants one minute and helps participants find partners if they need it.

Once pairs are formed, the facilitator instructs everyone to stand facing their partner, then continues giving instructions:

Each leader should hold your hand spread open, palm facing your partner, 5-6 inches from the follower's face. All the leaders: try it now.

Followers: when your leader starts moving their hand around, your job is try to keep your face exactly the same distance from their hand, whether it moves forwards or backwards, up or down, or twists one way or another.

I am going to demonstrate now, so watch carefully before doing it.

The facilitator asks someone from the pair nearest to them to act as their partner for the demo. The facilitator instructs them to be the leader and hold their hand, spread open, 5-6 inches from the facilitator's face and to move it slowly. The facilitator demonstrates following the hand with their face for a few moments then stops.

The facilitator announces to the group that they're going to count to 5 and then leaders should begin.

After 1 minute, the facilitator calls FREEZE and then instructs pairs to switch who is the leader and the follower. The facilitator counts to 5 again and then gives the pairs another minute to do the activity.

This activity comes from Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed workshops. For a list of other games see [here](#) or [Games for Actors and Non-Actors](#).

Power Graffiti Board

10 MIN

The facilitator puts up a large piece of paper with the word POWER written at the top.

Participants are asked to throw out all the words that come to mind when they see/hear the word Power.

If participants need more prompting to think of responses, the facilitator asks these questions to get their ideas flowing:

What does "power" mean?

What is it?

What does it make you think of?

Who has power?

The facilitator or a volunteer captures all of the words being thrown out and writes them up on the large piece of paper

Once the flow of ideas slows down, the facilitator directs the conversation to reflect on the previous activity by asking the group these questions:

How did we see power in the hypnosis game?

When did the leader have power?

The follower?

Was there a struggle over power?

If I didn't tell you to switch between leader and follower, do you think you would ever have switched on your own? Or do you think the leader would have remained the leader the whole time?

How could the follower have tried to become the leader? ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Game of Thrones

15 MIN

The facilitator places an empty chair in the center of the space and then places four more empty chairs nearby.

The facilitator asks two volunteers to work together to position the chairs to show that the first chair has POWER OVER the rest of the chairs.

Facilitator Note: Participants may be hesitant or have questions—encourage them not to overthink, and to go with their first instinct. Facilitator should remind everyone there is not one “right” way of doing this. If there are no stand-alone chairs available, this activity can be adapted to be done with any objects

of the same type—binders, books, bodies, pencils...

After the group observes how the chairs have been placed, two more volunteers are asked to come up and rearrange the chairs so that the four chairs have POWER UNDER the first chair—meaning that the first chair has POWER OVER them but they are building power together to push back from under the first chair's power.

Once the group has a moment to observe how the volunteers chose to position the chairs, the facilitator asks for two more volunteers.

This pair of volunteers is asked to place the four chairs in relation to the first chair to show that all five have POWER WITH each other. Then the facilitator asks people to reflect on the exercise, starting with these questions: **Were any of the forms of power harder to figure out how to represent than others?**

Which of the forms of power that we explored in this exercise have you experienced in one way or another? ■

Wrap Up

20 MIN

Written up on a piece of flipchart paper or on the [Power assignment](#) that is distributed, the facilitator asks participants to follow along as one volunteer reads out loud this definition of power:

Power is the ability to make action happen.

Power can be negative or positive.

Power appears in every level of human life: public, personal and internal.

Power can be visible or hidden/invisible.

Power is not just between people—there can be power in institutions, knowledge, customs or beliefs.

Facilitator then asks the group:

Is this how we usually understand what power is?



Can anyone think of an example of one of these aspects of power in the real world?

Do you think power is important to think about when studying the history of the U.S.?

Why do you think it's important to understand how power works and to name it the way we've tried to today?

Facilitator concludes the session by handing out the **Power Word** list and the assignment, explaining what's going to happen next and going over the assignment:

Now that we've begun exploring what power is and how it works in our world, we're going to start developing a shared language to talk about it together in our next session. Let's read through the assignment...

Read through this list of "Power Words."

These are words that describe different things having to do with how power works in our lives.

Your assignment is to ask at least one person in your family or a friend outside of this class the questions below.

1) Which of these words are you familiar with?

Circle or put a star next to the words the person talks about on the list.

2) Are any of these words describing something that you experience or think is important in your own life? If so, which ones? Why?

Take notes on the responses.

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Prepare Power Word flipchart papers (see Defining Power activity below) for each small group.
- Print **Power Words Images** packet.

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Intro

5 MIN

The steps for the opening activity are written up on the board. The facilitator begins by welcoming everyone and going over the steps they're about to go through.

Defining Power Words

25 MIN

Participants divide into small groups. Each group receives a large piece of paper and markers.

The facilitator has prepared the large paper to look like this:

Power Word:	
Defining it in our own words	
Examples	
Local & Current	From another place & the past
Additional Examples	
Image	

STEP 1 Participants share the responses they gathered through the Power assignment from the previous session.

As a group, decide on one Power Word to focus on. Groups should choose different words. Facilitator can write them up as they are claimed.

The group chooses a notetaker, and this person writes the chosen Power Word on the top of the flipchart paper in the designated area.

STEP 2 Participants write their own definition of the Power Word on the paper. If they are having trouble they can refer to the list or look things up on phones/computers, but the definition should be in their own language.

STEP 3 Participants brainstorm concrete examples of the Power Word they're focusing on, filling out the two sections (local/current and another place/past).

STEP 4 Groups share their work with each other:
Each group trades papers with another group. Each group reads through the other group's definition and examples.
Each group concludes by adding one more example, idea, or question related to the Power Word to the other group's paper in the designated area.

STEP 5 Each group receives the **Power Words Images** packet.
Groups look through the images provided and choose one that connects to the Power Word they are working with (the one they got from the other group).
The group pastes the image that they chose in the designated section on their Power Word paper.

STEP 6 Every group tapes their Power Word flipchart paper up on the wall next to each other to form a "gallery" of the papers.

Participants walk through the "gallery" to check out the definitions and images that other groups offered.
Once participants are finished looking, they are asked to find one other person to form a pair with for the next activity. ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Seeing Power in the World

15 MIN

Facilitator explains the transition:

Now that we have started to develop some shared language to talk about the issues related to power in the world around us, in pairs we are going to get specific and personal, thinking about power problems in our own communities...

Participants form pairs and receive the **Power In the World worksheet** to fill out together. ■

Say the Word

10 MIN

The facilitator asks pairs to share back with the group by responding to these questions:

- 1) What is the issue you talked about?
- 2) In general, did you find the Power Words helpful in thinking or talking about the issue? Why or why not? ■

Media Analysis Basics



FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Media is “constructed.” Media messages are shaped by the ideologies and interests of the media makers. Their values and points of view are embedded within the media they make.

Media is a powerful tool for maintaining, changing, controlling, challenging, or expanding people’s understandings of the world around them.

Media plays a key role in shaping the way identities such as gender, race, class, and sexuality are formed and enacted in society.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Why does it matter who creates media?
How can you decode media?

How might different people understand this message differently from me?
How does media affect our ideas of ourselves and the world around us?

GOALS

Participants will develop a deeper understanding of the role and purpose of media in society.

Participants will build their media literacy—the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms.

Participants will think critically about the concepts of frame and ideology and how they shape media.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH. 11-12.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH. 11-12.8
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH. 11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) questions for working with images.
- Review [Global Action Project's Curriculum](#).
- Review [Coverage of the Iraq War](#) to think about framing and ideology of media.

MATERIALS

- [Media Framing](#) worksheet
- [Media Frame](#) example
- [Power Word](#) list
- [Power Words Images](#) packet/slideshow
- [Media & Power Words Worksheet](#)
- Colored pencils, pens, blank paper

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Write up the instructions for the Making Our Own Message activity on a board or flip-chart paper to have on hand.

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Defining Media

10 MIN

Facilitator begins by asking people to define MEDIA:

What is media?

What are different forms of media we interact with in our daily lives?

Examples: television, radio, magazines, blogs, websites, billboards, newspapers, movies, books

After accumulating a thorough list, the facilitator asks the group:

Do you think media is powerful or important in our society? Why?

Does it matter who creates media? Why?

After hearing from a few participants, if helpful, the facilitator can share something along these lines:

Media is a powerful tool for shaping, maintaining, and/or changing the way people think about society—it can control or expand what we know and how we think about ourselves and others.

Thus it is important for us to be able to analyze media—to think critically about the messages it is sending and how it is presenting information about our world.

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Media Framing

25 MIN

Facilitator holds up/projects the Media Frame example and asks:

What do we see within the frame?

What is the purpose of the frame?

Facilitator shows the flip side of the media frame example and asks:

What does the frame do to the picture? To the meaning or message?

After gathering several responses from participants, the facilitator offers this:

All media has a frame.

The FRAME defines what you are looking at, just as a literal frame would when placed around a picture.

Facilitator hands out [Media Framing](#) handout and then asks:

So if every piece of media is shaped by a FRAME, how do media makers choose what the FRAME is? Can someone please volunteer to read for us the 2nd paragraph on the handout—the part that begins with IDEOLOGY? IDEOLOGY is a set of beliefs, ideas or values that come from the people creating the media. When it comes to media, IDEOLOGY frames the MESSAGE – it dictates what is included within the frame. It guides WHAT or WHO we include in the piece, and HOW issues are represented or presented.

Facilitator:

What does this mean?

What are ideas or values that shape your

ideology—the way you see things?

Facilitator solicits ideas from participants, and if appropriate and helpful, offers:

Here are some ideologies that some people might be guided by: patriotism, religion, ideas about economics like the “free market,” views on sexuality or abortion, etc...

Facilitator: **The handout next says:**

The FRAME defines what you are looking at, just as a literal frame would when placed around a picture.

So the message is what is delivered to the consumer of the media—to you and me.

Project image 18 of the [Power Words Images](#).

Let’s look at this piece of media.

What do you see? First just describe things that you see in the picture—don’t interpret the image, don’t share opinions about what’s going on yet—just tell me what you see.

Facilitator note: For a more extensive version of this line of questioning, see [Visual Thinking Strategies](#).

Example ideal response: There are young children who seem to be in a school in a neat and orderly line with their hands on each other’s shoulders, they are smiling, they are shaking hands with a soldier, there is a person of some kind of authority—maybe a teacher—smiling and putting his hand on the first student’s head.

After the image has been described, the facilitator moves the group on to the next stage of media analysis:

**What story is this image telling us?
What is the message of this image?**

Example ideal response: The American soldier is kind and interested in meeting the people of Iraq. The people of Iraq are happy to see the soldiers. It’s an organized and positive environment.

After participants share their analysis of the image and its message, the facilitator asks the final question for this exercise:

Take a guess at the IDEOLOGY behind the making of this piece of media. What beliefs are behind this media—about the U.S., about the U.S. presence in Iraq, about the

Middle East, about the military, etc...?

Example ideal response: This image represents the US army as a benevolent presence in Iraq, one that is providing help and stability. It’s meant to humanize the soldiers and present a picture of calm and goodness. This media seemingly comes from a media maker who wants to represent the US army and occupation of Iraq in a positive light.

What is left out of the frame? What would we see if we zoom out?

This activity is based on the Media Analysis handout in [Global Action Project’s Curriculum](#).

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Making Our Own Messages

20 MIN

Participants each receive a blank piece of paper and markers/pens/colored pencils are made available.

Facilitator reads through the instructions for the next activity:

STEP 1 Think about an event or an ongoing issue that you think is important in the world today. Write this down.

STEP 2 Below this, write notes on what you BELIEVE and THINK about this event or issue. Next, write what message you want to send people about this event/issue.

STEP 3 Think about how you can show this message in an image and capture it in a caption or news heading. Write down images and words that will get your message across.

What do people need to see in your opinion, to understand this issue/event the way you hope they do?

STEP 4 Flip over your paper and pretend you are creating the cover of a magazine about this issue/event that will get your message across. Sketch this

out. (Stick figures are ok! Include a headline and label images that aren't clear).

We will begin the next session by sharing these, so put your name on the notes side of your paper and hand them in before leaving.

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Print [Power Words Images](#), [Power Word list](#) and [Media & Power Words Worksheet](#).

Analyzing Our Own Media

15 MIN

As participants enter the classroom, they receive back their own media papers. If anyone needs a few extra minutes to finish it up, they can do that while everyone is settling in.

Facilitator gives the instructions to the whole group before dividing participants into pairs.

Instructions: You are going to get into pairs with someone who is sitting far away from you in the room.

Once you are in pairs, making sure the image side of your paper is the one that's up and visible, trade papers and DO NOT look at the notes side of the media paper your partner gave you.

Once you've taken a good look at the media your partner made, take turns analyzing each other's media.

Decide together who will go first.

Tell your partner what you think the message of their media is—what ideas you think they're trying to get across. Tell your partner what ideology or belief system you think might be framing this piece of media they made. Then your partner can tell you what they

had been thinking and you can flip the page over and look at their notes and see how effectively they got their message across. Then SWITCH! ■

Media Analysis Using the Power Words

20 MIN

Facilitator brings everyone's attention back together and explains the next activity.

Each pair receives the [Power Words Images](#) packet, [Media & Power Words Worksheet](#) and [Power Word List](#). Using the worksheet to guide them, pairs reflect on the media and draw from the Power Word List to analyze the message, the frame, and the ideology (see worksheet for instructions). ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Group Media Analysis

10 MIN

The facilitator brings the group back together to look at a couple of media images from the packet projected so all can see.

Facilitator: Can someone show us one of media pieces they focused on? Which power words did you connect to it, and why? What is the frame? The ideology? ■

Closing

10 MIN

Facilitator: So now we are all closer to being media analysts! We have looked at media and thought critically about how the frame shapes the media, and that the frame is shaped by the ideology of the media maker.

How has this made you think differently about a piece of media in your life? ■

Whose Freedom? Our Freedom!

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The idea of Freedom is central to the identity of the United States as a nation (i.e. the Land of the Free).

Freedom in the U.S. has always been defined for certain populations at the expense of others.

To be self determining is to have the power to make decisions about your life without outside influence, but also with respect to the self-determination of other individuals and the collective.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is freedom?
Who has access to freedom?
What is self-determination?

GOALS

Participants will think critically about the idea of freedom in the United States as understood by different people.

Participants will articulate how self-determination and freedom differ in the U.S. and for themselves.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review **Thoughts on Freedom** from The Knotted Line.

MATERIALS

- **Freedom in the U.S.** handout
- White/chalkboard
- Flipchart paper & markers
- **Power images** packet
- **Notes on Freedom** handout
- Access to knottedline.com for students, or print version

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Print **Freedom in the U.S. handout** for each participant.
- Write up SELF DETERMINATION flipchart table for Determining Self Determination activity.

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Land of the Free Debate

15 MIN

The facilitator explains the activity:

We are going to have a debate about a statement. The wall to my right is the “agree” wall, to my left is the “disagree” wall. I’m going to reveal a statement in a moment and you will go to the area of the room that indicates what you think of the statement. We will put eight minutes on the clock and then you will debate the statement. First, try to understand every word of the statement, then make your argument. If someone says something that changes your mind, feel free to move to a new area in the room.

Statement:

“The U.S. is the Land of the Free.”

As the debate happens, the facilitator should take notes under two columns on the board. On one side are examples of freedom (ex. freedom of speech, free public education), on the other side are examples of unfreedom (ex. people are profiled for their religion or race, U.S. incarcerates millions of people).

When the time is up ask people to read through the notes. What are other forms of freedom/unfreedom that didn't come up? What was something unexpected that was mentioned?

Facilitator transitions the group: Keeping these examples and evidence fresh in our mind, let's define what freedom is, because clearly it's a complicated idea!

This activity is adapted from the Debate Activity designed by Detroit Future Schools and is best when used regularly. For more on how it builds group culture and analysis, listening and collaboration skills, see <http://www.detroitfutureschools.org/toolkit/>

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Defining Freedom

20 MIN

Thinking about the debate, what is your definition of freedom?

Participants find a partner next to them and write a definition of FREEDOM.

As pairs finish, ask for people to share their definition with the group. The facilitator should write this on the board/paper.

The facilitator then asks if any other pair has a definition that is significantly different than the one already offered.

After the second pair shares, other pairs are asked to offer their whole definitions if they're really different or parts that may be additional/different. The facilitator adds the different

elements up to the original definition.

The facilitator then passes out the **Freedom in the U.S. handout**. Volunteers are asked to read the two statements to the group. Check for understanding on any words or phrases and then discuss the pieces:

What do you think about these takes on FREEDOM? What do they mean?

What parts stand out for you?

How are they similar to your definitions?

How are they different?

How do they contradict each other?

Determining Self-Determination

20 MIN

The facilitator transitions the group to the closing activity by offering:

Now that we have a lot of thoughts about what FREEDOM is and the different things it can mean, let's explore another related idea: SELF DETERMINATION.

▼ The facilitator points the group's attention to the flipchart paper that's been posted up for all to view.

After asking a participant to read the bolder term and guiding questions at the top, the facilitator walks participants through the examples, pausing for questions, asking for participants' own ideas of other examples,

and elaborating if necessary.

Facilitator asks the group:

What are concrete examples of individual and collective self determination?

What does SELF DETERMINATION have to do with FREEDOM?

If we had done the debate as "The U.S. is the land of the self determined," how would that have been different?

After collecting some responses, the facilitator lets the group know that the next session will begin by diving into what SELF DETERMINATION looks like in real life. ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Create a blank table (on butcher paper, wall, or board) for individual and collective examples of SELF DETERMINATION images.
- Print **Power Words Images** packet and **Notes on Freedom** worksheet.

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Self Determination What does it look like?

20 MIN

As participants enter the room, they receive

SELF DETERMINATION What is it? What does it look like in practice?	
Individual	Collective
<p>The power or ability to make a decision for oneself without influence from outside.</p> <p>Freedom to live as one chooses, or to act or decide without consulting others.</p>	<p>The right of a nation or people to determine its own form of government without influence from outside.</p> <p>Freedom of the people of a given area to determine their own political status; independence.</p>

the **Power Words Images** packet. Once everyone is settled in, the facilitator delivers the instructions to the group as a whole.

The facilitator points out that the examples of self determination paper is back up on the wall for everyone to review and refer to.

(Participants can work in pairs or solo for this activity. The facilitator should just make sure the transition process is smooth and efficient). Instructions:

Look through the media images in your packet and identify ones that you think represent SELF DETERMINATION—either individual or collective.

When you've chosen an image, use the tape that is available to put the image up in either the INDIVIDUAL or COLLECTIVE column in the SELF DETERMINATION table that is up on the board next to the one with examples:

SELF DETERMINATION	
What does it look like in practice?	
Individual	Collective

If a particular image is already up there, you do not need to put it up—you should only place images in the table that have not already been included.

After all of the images pertaining to self determination have been placed up in the table, the facilitator asks the group to reflect on how these images represent SELF DETERMINATION. ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners
Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Looking at U.S. History

25 MIN

Participants each receive the **Notes on Freedom** worksheet and write a definition of FREEDOM in the middle section of the worksheet.

Original definitions of FREEDOM from Workshop 1 should be posted back up on the wall for participants to review and refer to.

Participants then are invited to explore The Knotted Line. This may be the first time they're interacting with it so they are invited to just play around for a little while to see how it works.

Facilitator Note: Depending on the number of participants and computers or copies of the printed Knotted Line, participants may have to work together in smaller or larger groups.

After 5-10 minutes, the facilitator calls for everyone's attention briefly and delivers instructions:

Now that you've played around a little, choose one event/image that you think represents RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM and one that represents SELF DETERMINATION.

Use the worksheet you have to guide you in describing the images and answering the questions- writing how each image connects to your understandings of FREEDOM or SELF DETERMINATION. ■

Conclusion Are We Free?

10 MIN

The group comes back together.

The facilitator asks the group some of these questions to guide reflection and synthesis:-
So now that we've explored what FREEDOM means and what SELF DETERMINATION can look like in practice...

Are we free?

Are YOU free?

Is the U.S. a country where everyone is SELF DETERMINING? How so or how not?

Do you think SELF DETERMINATION is important? ■



Entering the Knotted Line

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Historical narratives are “authored.” History is not a neutral, objective, or universal report on what happened at a given time.

Historical narratives are often framed by “the winner” or dominant society, and bury other stories. Anyone can be a part of creating and uncovering the other stories.

Different understandings are revealed when history is studied chronologically compared to when it is studied by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does the past live in the present?
Why and how does history “repeat”?

GOALS

Participants will see themselves as connected to the past and develop an understanding of its impacts on their own lives.

Participants will use multiple historical viewpoints to highlight the relationship of actions of oppression and self-determination.

Participants will expand their understanding of the connections between historical and current historical moments.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with [The Knotted Line content surrounding the Chinese Immigration Act](#).
- Familiarize yourself with [The Knotted Line content surrounding current immigration laws and resistance](#).

MATERIALS

- Blank paper (scratch paper is fine), markers, pens, pencils
- String & tape
- Computer/projector to play [online video](#) & [Entering the Knotted Line slideshow](#)

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Prepare an example image for the Pictures from the Past activity.
- [Preload the Knotted Line video](#), cued to 1:07.

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Pictures from the Past

15 MIN

Before participants enter the space, the facilitator places a blank paper on each desk or spot where someone will sit.

Facilitator begins with this prompt:

Choose a moment in history—anywhere in the world, any era—that has affected you in some way.

Think about this: was there an event that led to your ancestors changing locations, was there a decision that was made that impacted your community, was there a war/disaster/revelation/encounter that changed a culture that you come from?

It could have happened hundreds of years ago or just a few years ago.

Facilitator note: This is a good place for the facilitator to help people conceptualize the activity more concretely by sharing a personal example:

For example, an event that affected how my family's history played out was _____.

An image that I could choose to represent that is _____.

Everyone take a minute or two to brainstorm, then use the markers/pens/colored pencils to draw that image that could represent a moment in history that has had a serious impact on your culture, family, or community.

Markers, pens, and pencils are available on tables/desks.

Participants draw an image responding to the prompt.

When participants finish at their own pace, facilitator asks them to write somewhere on the page a few words describing/naming the historical moment being depicted.

When everyone seems finished, transition into the next activity. ■

Putting the Pieces Together

25 MIN

The group's attention is guided towards a string that has been taped to the wall or a big white board.

Four people are invited to take pieces of tape and place their historical moment images on the line. If they are related, they can group them together, otherwise they should spread them out.

A second group of four does the same. The participants should be advised to cluster drawings together that have a relationship or can build off of each other, like a magnet or word cloud or scrabble board. The images don't all have to stay on the line, either.

This continues until everyone has placed their images on the wall.

The facilitator prompts reflection with questions:
What kinds of experiences/moments/events have shaped us and how?

What are connections between our experiences?

Have these historical moments that have shaped our lives been destructive/harmful? Have they been creative/strengthening? Both?

How have these moments that have shaped our communities/families been represented to us in history class and in U.S. media?

Have we learned what we want to learn about the history that is relevant to us?

The facilitator transitions the group by introducing The Knotted Line:

Now that we have reflected a little bit on how history has impacted us and shaped who we are, let's explore The Knotted Line, which is an interactive art piece and website that we can use to explore U.S. history in a more creative and critical way—in a way that reveals all of the forces at play and the way we're a part of it all.

Different understandings are revealed when history is looked at chronologically or when it is looked at by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time. So let's watch this video and see if it helps us understand The Knotted Line more clearly as a tool for studying history... ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Introduction of The Knotted Line

10 MIN

Show a segment of the [video](#), from 1:07-8:04. ■

Conclusion

5 MIN

Facilitator asks for participants' questions and responses.

Anything that the facilitator feels they can't answer accurately or completely, they should record and offer to research (or invite participants to research) and bring back responses next workshop.

The group is informed that the next workshop will involve diving into The Knotted Line and working with it now that the main ideas are clear. ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

Preload the [Entering the Knotted Line](#) slideshow.

Transhistorical Analysis Connecting the Dots

45 MIN

[Slideshow presentation](#)

What follows is only a suggested script for walking through the slideshow. It should be adapted to your needs.

SLIDE 1 We are going to explore how The Knotted Line works.

SLIDE 2 Before we go into it, let's think of the usual ways we learn history.

Facilitator solicits responses from participants and writes them on the board/paper.

Facilitator can offer examples to stimulate ideas if participants need it: books, documents, family stories, movies.

When we learn about a particular moment in

history or the history of a certain people or place, do we usually learn about it from different angles? Or only one angle?

SLIDE 3 Facilitator reads slide and asks the question: **What does the prefix “trans” mean?**

SLIDE 4 Facilitator offers examples to augment participant responses:
“TRANSatlantic” (across the ocean), “TRANS-gender” (beyond or traversing gender), “TRANSformation” (change in form), TRANSPORTation, TRANSition....

SLIDE 5 So when we say that The Knotted Line looks at history through a transhistorical view, what does that mean?

SLIDE 6 Facilitator reads the slide.

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

SLIDE 7 Facilitator reads the first part of the slide then asks a participant to volunteer to read the highlighted information out loud.

Facilitator then asks:

Even if right now you don’t know anything else about this law, let’s just guess based on what this tells us—what do you think we might be able to learn or discover about race and labor and immigration laws in this country from this act?

If you DO know anything else specific about it, share that too!

After several participant responses, the facilitator changes to the next slide.

Sample ideal participant responses: some immigrants are welcomed and allowed to “succeed” while others are not depending on where they come from, immigration laws are changed based on what labor the U.S. economy needs, immigrants are only valued for the work they can do.

SLIDE 8 The facilitator begins by explaining that these are two paintings from The Knotted Line. This is going to be a brief exploration of how The Knotted Line uses images to explore history and tell stories.

The facilitator then asks participants to reflect on the first painting: 1882: The Chinese Exclusion Act:

What does this painting tell us?

What does this image have to do with that law?

What does this tell us about the process of building the railroad?

Sample ideal responses: This painting shows that it was Chinese people doing the work and the white guy is dressed in a suit and off to the side without any tools. It shows that it is the white guy overseeing it while the other men are working. It shows that Chinese workers were necessary while building the railroad and then there was a law passed to exclude new immigrants when it was finished.)

After collecting several participant responses, the facilitator then asks participants to reflect on the second painting: The Last Spike.

Questions:

This painting is titled The Last Spike. What moment is being represented here?

Do you think that’s really how that moment went down?

Who do you see represented in this picture?

Who is not included in the frame?

What does this image have to do with the Chinese Exclusion Act?

What story does this tell about the building of the railroad?

What does this painting reveal about how history gets told in the U.S.?

Sample ideal participant responses: This is supposed to be the completion of the railroad. White men in suits are represented here as if they were the ones doing the work. The two Chinese workers are kneeling, holding

shovels, and there is one person who looks like they are Native American. But everyone is outnumbered by white men who look important and are doing things. It shows how a painting that glorifies the technical and economic achievements of white men is also erasing of the work of people of color and poor people that created the railroad (and built much of the country). If their story isn't included, it is easier to pass laws to exclude them because they aren't seen as central to American history.

SLIDE 9 Facilitator reads the question:
Why does this matter?

Follow up question:

Why is it important to think about laws or wars or other things that happened in the past?

Solicit several student responses.

Sample thoughts to share to add to participant responses:

The story of immigrants "stealing" jobs and "weighing down" the economy is a common story that was present in 1882 and today. Yet economic history shows that immigrants contribute a ton to local and national economies through their labor and the taxes they pay, and that actually it's business owners looking to increase their profits who are the ones driving the push for cheaper labor.

SLIDE 10 Facilitator asks a participant volunteer to read the slide.

Afterwards, facilitator asks participants to think of what forces and ways of thinking about things are at play now.

SLIDE 11 The facilitator asks a participant volunteer to read the slide and the question.

Examples if participants need help thinking of them:

Story of Columbus "discovering" America

The story of Thanksgiving (romantic story of friendship between pilgrims and Native Americans, whitewashing of colonization

and exploitation)

The story of the Iraq war (it was about fighting terrorism and weapons of mass destruction which didn't exist)

SLIDES 12, 13, 14 Facilitator reads.

SLIDE 15 Facilitator asks participants to look at the slide and respond:

According to this slide, what does the X-axis show us?

What does the Y-axis show us?

What is being "connected"?

(Sample ideal participant response: different historical events at different times that have similar things happening or have affected each other are being connected, the ideas and beliefs behind the events/laws)

SLIDE 16, 17 Facilitator goes through them.

SLIDE 18 Facilitator asks participant to read the first event given as an example and writes "1941" on the board.

Then another participant is asked to read the second event example listed.

The facilitator writes "1942" on the board a few inches to the right of "1941."

SLIDE 19 Facilitator reads the question:
How are these events possibly connected?

The facilitator should help the group make this connection:

Entering a war means soldiers (who used to be workers) are now going overseas to fight. Production and demand is increased in a wartime economy. This gap is filled by the Bracero workers, who are a cheaper workforce that is seen as temporary until the end of the war.

After some discussion of how they may have been related/connected, the facilitator offers a second question:

What does looking at the connections between these two events help us understand about how immigration policies work?

Sample ideal participant responses: labor is central to immigration policy, demand for cheaper labor, labor as a race issue, labor as a gender issue—only men allowed under Bracero and early Chinese immigration policy.

SLIDE 20, 21 Reminder: The X-axis is about when events happened along the timeline—1991, 1992, 1993...

The Y-axis is looking at these same events in terms of how the powers and ideas involved have popped up at different times throughout history and/or how these different events are connected to each other—they're not just happening randomly.

SLIDE 22, 23: Facilitator reads.

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

SLIDE 24 So...let's examine how all of this relates to our lives a bit more...

Facilitator asks a participant to read the example aloud and then asks the question at the bottom of the slide.

After soliciting several responses from participants, the facilitator might offer these examples:

gay marriage, prohibition of alcohol/marijuana, dress codes, immigration laws.

With each of these examples and examples offered by participants, the facilitator asks everyone to reflect on how they've changed and why.

SLIDE 25 Using the examples we've looked at, the Y-axis might connect these different moments around immigration and labor. Even though they are about different people, areas and times, they still have connections.

SLIDE 26, 27 Facilitator reads and then explains: **Put simply, the Z-axis is the histories that we as historians write, create and contribute to ongoing history. People working with the Knotted Line have created audio pieces, videos, dance performances, animations, written stories and essays, board games, playing cards...these are all examples of the Z-axis.**

Facilitator note: For a selection of student sample work, the facilitator can visit [here](#) and select several they believe will be interesting or inspiring to their group in particular. Enter them into the slideshow or show them separately at this point to give participants a more concrete sense of the Z-axis. ■

Closing Question

10 MIN

Facilitator asks:

Last session you thought about a historical moment that affected your family in particular. What is one other way that the past lives in our lives today?

Facilitator gathers several responses if it's a large group, or one thought from each participant if it's a smaller group.

If the preference is to do something active after a long slideshow, ask the group to get in a circle and think of a motion or movement that responds to the above question. In the circle, each person shares their motion. As they do it, everyone in the group copies that motion.

Facilitator explains that now that they're familiar with how it all works, the next session (Exploring the Knotted Line) will be working with The Knotted Line in a hands-on way. ■



Exploring the Knotted Line

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Historical narratives are “authored.” History is not a neutral, objective or universal report on what happened at a given time.

Historical narratives are often framed by “the winner” or dominant society, and bury other stories. Anyone can be a part of creating and uncovering the other stories.

Different understandings are revealed when history is studied chronologically compared to when it is studied by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does the past live in the present?

GOALS

Participants will practice a transhistorical analysis.

Participants will interrogate ways that the past is important to the present.

Participants will connect moments from different time periods to deepen their understanding of U.S. history.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with [Entering the Knotted Line Slideshow](#) and [Creating the X-Y axis slideshow](#)
- Go through the process of creating an [X-Y Axis Worksheet](#).

MATERIALS

- Whiteboard or poster paper with markers
- Blank paper (scratch paper is fine)
- Way to project or show the X-Y axis slideshow
- Computers or print version of Knotted Line
- [Power Word list](#)
- [X-Moment Evidence Card](#)
- [Evidence Cards](#)
- [X-Y Axis Worksheet](#)
- [Iceberg Worksheet](#)

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Print [Iceberg Worksheets](#), [Power Word list](#), [X-Moment Evidence Card](#), and [X-Y Axis Worksheet](#).
- Preload [knottedline.com](#) and click “Launch” before the group begins.

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Iceberg Activity

15 MIN

Facilitator draws up on the board the outline of an iceberg, with the water line drawn leaving a smaller portion above water than below.

Facilitator:

In the tip of the iceberg we write things about ourselves that can be known and seen—what are characteristics and things about us that fall into this category?

Facilitator asks participants to give examples and then offers these if helpful:

For some of us, sometimes—religion, community, ethnicity, neighborhood, nationality,

gender, etc.

The facilitator writes some of the examples up on the tip of the iceberg.

Then...

Along the water line, we write recent events/policies that have shaped us or had an impact on our selves, families, and/or our daily lives. For example, I would write _____ (facilitator provides a tangible personal example).

Other examples might include recent drug laws, recent immigration policies, whether our state legalized gay marriage, neighborhood zoning, school system, etc

Then...

Underneath the water, we look back to older events/laws/people that may affect our lives today. For example, I would write _____ (facilitator provides a tangible personal example; these might be big events like a specific war or natural disaster, or they might be small stories passed down in a family).

Each participant fills in their own [Iceberg worksheet](#).

So now that we've reflected on what's beneath the surface of our current reality, we're ready to explore the way The Knotted Line draws connections between different parts of U.S. history and our own lives... ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the
Personal to the Theoretical

Set Up for Exploration Project

15 MIN

The [X-Y axis slideshow](#) includes facilitator notes for giving instructions for the hands-on Knotted Line Exploration Project. Participants can also go through it individually so that they can begin working with [knottedline.com](#) at their own pace.

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

X-Y Axis Exploration Project

25 MIN

Participants access knottedline.com (the size of groups will change depending on access to computers or prints of the work) and play with the site. Once they are comfortable with the navigation, they should go through the steps outlined in the above slideshow.

Participants will need the following materials:

- [Power Word list](#)
- [X-Moment Evidence Card](#)
- [X-Y Axis Worksheet](#)

Facilitator should remind participants that they will continue with the work in the following session. ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Preload knottedline.com and click "Launch" before the group begins.
- Print [Evidence Cards](#).

Facilitator Note: This workshop is designed as part of the longer projects in this guide. If you have limited time, you can shorten the research aspect and move on to the creative writing activity earlier.

Opening

10 MIN

Go-around:

What is a thread, a theme, an idea that you found flowing through U.S. history as you explored The Knotted Line? It can be positive, negative, anything.

Check for understanding on the process:

What are people having confusion with as

they do this work? Can anyone describe helpful tips for navigating the site or understanding what we are doing? ■

Deepen the Research

20-45 MIN

Hand out the [Evidence Cards](#).

Now that you've started your research, you should find one or two additional pieces of historical evidence about your chosen X and Y moments. Use these cards to keep track of your research and notes.

Facilitator note: If you are doing the creative writing activity you should have participants choose one x-moment and one y-moment to focus on. ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Historical Collision optional

25 MIN

When the group has done enough research to have a fuller idea of their two moments, transition the group:

We are going to play with history a bit now. Imagine that your two moments have just been smashed together in a crazy time-space warp. Describe the scene—what is happening? How do people communicate? Is there some sort of conflict?

Leave enough time to have a handful of people share out their writing. They should start by saying what their chosen x and y moments were. ■

We the People?



FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Historical narratives are “authored.” History is not a neutral, objective or universal report on what happened at a given time.

Historical narratives are often framed by “the winner” or dominant society, and bury other stories. Anyone can be a part of creating and uncovering the other stories.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Who does U.S. history include?

GOALS

Participants will critically reflect on the founding narratives of the U.S.

Participants will explore how freedom has been defined in the U.S. and define it for themselves.

Participants will investigate the Constitutional principles in U.S. society from multiple perspectives.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review [Entering the Knotted Line](#) slideshow and workshop.
- Review [Howard Zinn interview](#) on the U.S. Constitution.
- Familiarize yourself with the painting *The Scene at the Signing of the U.S. Constitution* via this website: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/christy/>

MATERIALS

- 8.5x11" pieces of paper cut in half, enough for each student
- Pencils, colored pencils or pens
- Ability to project [Scene at the Signing of The Constitution](#) by Howard Chandler Christy and [Entering the Knotted Line](#) slideshow
- Handout with text of Constitution preamble
- Access to knottedline.com for students or print version
- [X-Y Axis Worksheet](#)
- 2 different colored note cards (2-4 per student)
- Printed copies of Langston Hughes's poem [Let America Be America Again](#) for each student

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Have the [Scene at the Signing of The Constitution](#) painting ready for projection
- Have the preamble text ready for projection

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Entry activity

10 MIN

As participants arrive, they respond in writing to the following question: "What is the difference between a right and a responsibility?"

On the board/flipchart paper, the facilitator writes "Right" and "Responsibility" at the top of two columns. The facilitator asks for student responses and takes notes on the differences. ■

Class Constitution

15 MIN

Participants receive several pink and several green index cards (any two different colors will work).

The facilitator explains the activity:

On the pink cards, write one RIGHT you think you should have in this workshop/class to make it the best learning space possible. You cannot create rights here that take away the rights of other people.

On the green cards, write one RESPONSIBILITY you should have in this workshop/class to make it the best learning space possible.

Once everyone has written at least one idea on each color of card, the facilitator asks participants to read them out loud and helps categorize them (rights and responsibilities). This is a good moment to clarify the differences between the ideas, using the opening activity as a reference. Tape the cards in the two columns from the opening activity.

Go around the room and ask participants if there is anything missing, or anything that they absolutely can't agree with (i.e. it infringes on their own rights).

Facilitator:

What we just went through is the creation of our group's constitution. This is a "living document," meaning that we can change it, add to it or take parts out if we find they are not working. The experience of creating it together is also important—we had a voice in this document that will govern our time together for the next two workshops. Can everyone agree to try to uphold these rights and responsibilities for these two workshops?

If there are certain ideas that don't work, the conversation should continue. It is important to stress here that these are ideals, so this doesn't have to fit perfectly but it gives the group something to work with.

Facilitator:

I want you to keep this process in mind as we switch to thinking about

the U.S. Constitution. ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Constitutions Compare & Contrast

10 MIN

Look at the painting [Scene at the Signing of the Constitution](#) by Howard Chandler Christy.

Facilitator note: Students may ask who is who in the painting. Here is a website that gives background on the painting: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/christy/christy/>

Facilitator guides participants through the following steps of analyzing the image and practicing visual literacy skills:

Observation:

First, we are just going to look deeply. Spend one minute just looking without talking.

After one minute:

List everything that you see in the picture. We are not trying to give meaning to anything yet, just the basic things in the painting, which might also include the colors, lighting, etc.

Facilitator Note: Participants will often try to jump ahead here. It's important to bring it back to the basics of just what they see. It is helpful to point at and repeat the things as participants name them.)

Representation:

Who is in the picture? Where are they? What can you infer based on the details we just listed?

Action:

What are they doing? What do you think is the consequence of their action? What will happen next?

Meaning:

What do you think the artist was intending to

convey by how they painted the image?

What are the differences and similarities between the creators of our constitution and the creators of the U.S. Constitution?"

What or who did the artist leave out? ■

The Constitution Preamble

15 MIN

Participants receive a handout with the text of the Constitution Preamble:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Facilitator:

We are going to go through this and break down these different words that make up the principles of the Constitution. As we go through, you should take notes on the words. So, who can explain what one of these mean? General welfare? ...

The facilitator continues to guide the group through breaking down each of the principles or words that are unclear. When finished, check for understanding.

Facilitator:

So now that we know what this means, let's go back to the first words: "We the people." Who is included in this? Let's start by thinking back to the painting. Who else was living in North America at that time? Who was not included in the Constitution?

The facilitator takes notes as participants offer different people not included in the Constitution. This is everyone who is in North America who was not a white European Christian man who owned property: enslaved people, Native Americans, white women, Jewish people, in-

dentured servants, poor white people, etc. ■

Conclusion

5 MIN

Introduce the assignment:

Assignment: Read Langston Hughes's poem, *Let America Be America Again*.

Write 2-3 sentences about what you think this has to do with today's activity.

Facilitator:

To close, choose one principle from the Constitution that you think is important. We will go around the room and everyone will say their choice.

In our next session, we'll begin to interpret the Constitution even more. ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Have The Knotted Line Constitution painting ready for projection.
- Pre-load knottedline.com and click "launch" on the homepage.
- Print or make an example piece for the final activity.

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Entry activity

10 MIN

Participants view the following painting from knottedline.com: <http://scalar.usc.edu/anvc/the-knotted-line/painting-1789--constitution>

In pairs, participants use the visual thinking questions from the previous workshop to analyze the painting (these questions should be visible in the room):

Observation:

List everything that is in the picture.

Representation:

Who is in the picture? Where are they? What can you infer based on the details we just listed?

Action:

What are they doing? What do you think is the consequence of their action? What will happen next?

Meaning:

What do you think the artist was intending to convey by how they painted the image?

Facilitator: This image is from The Knotted Line. The painting on the bottom is from 2003 when President Bush signed the Partial Birth Abortion Act into law, resulting in a fine or imprisonment of anyone performing a late-term abortion. Why do you think the artist connected these images? Who is the law about? Who is signing the bill?

What does this have to do with the Langston Hughes poem that you read?

Facilitator transition: We are going to practice thinking this way, across history. We are going to make historical connections to the principles of the Constitution that we looked at previously. ■

The Knotted Line

30 MIN

Facilitator Note: If participants have done the Entering the Knotted Line workshop; *the X-Y axis slideshow* and/or *Creating the X-Y Axis*, this will largely be review. If the participants haven't had a chance to work with the X-Y axis, the following steps are meant to walk participants through creating the X-Y axis.

Facilitator Note: If you are working on computers, it is most efficient to pre-load knottedline.com and click "Launch."

Hand out *X-Y worksheets*. The facilitator should have a large version (either drawn or projected) that they can fill out during the following steps.

Facilitator:

We are going to use these worksheets and knottedline.com to explore how historical moments have been in line with, or in conflict with, the principles of the Constitution.

STEP 1 Write “The signing of the Constitution” and the principle you chose at the end of the last workshop in the X-Moment section. For example, my principle is “form a more perfect union.” (Facilitator adds this to the large version)

STEP 2 On the Y-Axis, we will use the Knotted Line and your knowledge of history to find y-moments in which people’s actions were in line with, or in conflict with, the principle. On the top, we write moments that are in line with the principle. For example, in **1917 women’s rights activists are imprisoned while fighting for the right to vote**. This would go above the X-Moment line because women were fighting for this principle (Facilitator adds this to the large version).

An example for below the X-Moment line might be in 1942 when all persons of Japanese descent are ordered by the U.S. government into internment camps during World War II (Facilitator adds this to the large version).

Check for understanding and questions.

STEP 3 You are now going to begin creating your own X-Y Axis. (Participants should access knottedline.com or work with print versions of the paintings.) For the first 5-10 minutes, just explore and play with the site. Then begin filling out your Y Axis with moments that relate to your chosen principle from the X-Moment. ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners
Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Time Travel Writing/ Drawing

10 MIN

Participants are given an 8.5x11” sheet of blank paper.

Facilitator:

Fold the piece of paper in half, hamburger-style. On the top, you will draw or write about your chosen principle as it is imagined in the Constitution.

On the inside of the folded paper, you will create a drawing, letter, journal entry or poem from the perspective of someone from one of your Y-Moments. The piece should be about how the principle relates to them (Example).

Facilitator Note: This can be extended as needed and completed at home or in a separate session. ■

Conclusion

5 MIN

3-5 participants share their in-process or completed pieces. ■

Timeline of Resistance



FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The relationship between resistance and oppression is important in understanding what happened at a given historical moment.

Different understandings are revealed when history is studied chronologically compared to when it is studied by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time.

Historical narratives are often framed by “the winner” or dominant society, and bury other stories. Anyone can be a part of creating and uncovering the other stories.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Who tells the story of history?
Who in the past has fought for you?

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

GOALS

Participants will explore U.S. history through the lens of resistance and oppression.

Participants will develop critical thinking around who tells history.

Participants will trace connections between themselves and the past.

Participants will expand their understanding of the connections between historical and current struggles for freedom in the U.S.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review the [Timeline of Resistance complete list](#) and add or adjust as needed for your group.
- Go through the process of creating an X-Y Axis Worksheet.

MATERIALS

- Whiteboard or flipchart paper and markers
- “Lions and history” proverb written out large (see below)
- String and tape
- [Dates](#) printed and cut
- [Timeline of Resistance](#) large handouts printed and cut
- [Timeline of Resistance complete list](#)
- Ability to project/view [themes](#) from [knottedline.com](#)
- Half sheets of blank paper (scratch paper is fine)
- [Infinity of Traces Tattoo](#) worksheets

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Create a “timeline” along your longest available wall using a piece of tape/string/etc. If there aren’t walls, use string and clothespin to create your timeline.
- Cut up the [Timeline of Resistance dates](#) from the The Knotted Line and tape them on the timeline on the wall.
- Cut up the events (one per sheet) from the [Timeline of Resistance text](#) print out.
- Make copies of [Timeline of Resistance complete list](#) for all participants.

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Introductions & Inspiration

10 MIN

Facilitator begins a go-around in which each person shares their name and someone who

has inspired them in U.S. history. A facilitator captures the inspirations on a board or flipchart paper.

Reflection

What do we notice about this list of people who have inspired us?

Who is represented? Where are they from?

Who isn’t on this list? ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Historical Narrative The Lion & The Hunter

10 MIN

The facilitator puts up a flipchart paper with the following quote and asks a participant to read it out loud:

“Until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.”

Ewe-Mina proverb, West Africa

Facilitator prompts discussion:

What does this mean?

Who could be the lions at different points in U.S. history? Who are the hunters?

Think of an example historical event in the U.S.—reflect on the narrative of Thanksgiving. How does this proverb apply to the way that story is told in the U.S.?

What would it be like if we learned U.S. history from the perspective of the lion? What would change? ■

Introducing the Timeline of Resistance

35 MIN

(5 min) The facilitator points out the timeline

on the wall, made of string/tape with dates in bold on pieces of paper along it:

The timeline up on the wall goes from 1493 to 2012. This is a timeline of resistance, highlighting key moments of freedom fighters and U.S. history from a perspective of people's movements for social change. As we just discussed, there are different lenses through which to look at history and thus see different things from different angles...our lens for this activity is resistance.

How would you define resistance? What is it?

Note participant responses and then compare them to a visible definition of resistance. (Resistance: The action or power to oppose, withhold from, withstand, not comply or refuse something.) What is different, missing, similar?

15 MIN

Each participant receives a piece of paper with one event from the Timeline of Resistance.

Participants find two other people with events that they believe have some connection to theirs and form a small group.

In the groups of three, participants share their events and discuss what they see as the connections between these events. Choose one person to represent the group.

Facilitator Note: As participants get into groups of three, hand out one copy of the complete Timeline of Resistance to each group.

5 MIN

Groups receive a handout of the full Timeline of Resistance.

After finding their events on the timeline handout, they place their events on the appropriate dates on the timeline up on the wall.

5 MIN

Each group representative shares briefly about the connections between the moments. ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Project or write out the Gramsci quote (see below).
- Participants should have [Timeline of Resistance complete list](#).
- Print [Infinity of Traces Tattoo](#) worksheet

Intro Timeline Review

10 MIN

Participants review and read through different elements of the timeline. Facilitator then asks for 3-4 reflections on:

Is this similar/different than the list of inspirational people we came up with before?

How does this relate to the quote about the lion and hunter?

Do any of these moments surprise you? ■

Going Deeper

20 MIN

Read or project the following quote by Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist who did much of his writing while imprisoned:

"The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. Therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory."

What phrases stand out to you? What does this mean in your own language? (Facilitator note: It's helpful to break down the quote chunk by chunk. The core ideas being: knowing thyself, we are part of a historical process that we don't fully see, that we know ourselves through creating an inventory of that history—such as a timeline, music, storytelling, art, etc).

Hand out the Timeline of Resistance:

Next, you will begin to create your own

inventory of the infinity of traces. Looking through the Timeline of Resistance, put a star next to 3-5 historical events on the timeline handout that you think have some connection to your life and who you are today.

**When looking for events, ask yourself:
What events did my ancestors or family deal with that are mentioned here?
How did this ripple out to affect me?
What are events that I wasn't already familiar with?**

Once the instructions are clear, participants each star 3-5 moments and put their initials on the dates on the timeline on the wall.

Facilitator introduces the last element of the activity:

Now it's time to extend into the future. Imagine a future moment of self-determination or resistance that you want to see happen—what will future generations benefit from? ■

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Tracing the Connections

25 MIN

Thinking back to the Gramsci quote, you will next create an inventory of these traces by designing a tattoo. Tattoos can be poems or drawings, but they should tell a story of how your chosen moments have left a trace on you, your community, or your family. They might also include the vision of the future moment you created.

Facilitator hands out [Infinity of Traces Tattoo Worksheet](#), colored pencils and other art supplies. ■

This workshop is adapted from one created by Josh Healey for use with The Knotted Line.



Artifacts from the End of the Prison Industrial Complex



FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The United States has historically confined large portions of its population. Today this is manifest at a scale larger than ever before through prisons, jails and detention centers.

Imprisonment impacts different communities and people differently. The United States system disproportionately targets people of color, immigrants, queer, transgender, disabled, politically radical and poor people.

“Safety” does not mean the same thing to everyone.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is the prison industrial complex?

What does a world without prisons look like and what will get us there?

GOALS

Participants will explore U.S. history through the lens of resistance and oppression.

Participants will gain an understanding of the prison industrial complex (PIC) and why it is used as a concept.

Participants will explore historical roots of the PIC.

Participants will imagine ways to create a world without the PIC.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7



FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review the [Prison Industrial Complex Map](#) by Ashley Hunt or the [Intro to the PIC workshop](#) by the Chicago PIC teaching collective.
- Review [Critical Resistance's PIC Concentric Circles](#)

MATERIALS

- Materials Needed:
- Flipchart paper and markers
- Handout or projection of definition of prison industrial complex
- PIC Mapping handout ([Social, Economic, Political](#))
- [Power Words list](#)
- Student access to knottedline.com or print version
- Sheets of flipchart paper with alphabet written in two vertical columns (one column on left side, one down the middle)
- Blank paper, colored pencils or pens

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- Make four signs (agree, somewhat agree, disagree, somewhat disagree) and place one on each wall of the room.
- Prep three sheets of flipchart paper with the words "Prison," "Industrial," and "Complex" at the top (one word per page).
- Print [Power Words](#) and PIC Problem worksheets for each participant.
- Load The Knotted Line on computers or have the print versions available for participants (if working in small groups for the Identifying the Problems activity).

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Debate Activity

10 MIN

The facilitator explains the activity: On each wall you can see a sign. I'm going to reveal a

statement in a moment and you will go to the area of the room that indicates what you think of the statement. We will put six minutes on the clock and then you will debate the statement. First, try to understand every word of the statement, then make your argument. If someone says something that changes your opinion, feel free to move to a different area in the room.

Statement:

"Prisons create more problems than solutions in our communities."

Facilitator should take notes on the board as the debate happens. When the time is up ask: What was something unexpected that you learned or heard? Why did you change your mind (if anyone did)? ■

This activity is adapted from the Debate Activity designed by Detroit Future Schools and is best when used regularly. For more on how it builds group culture and analysis, listening and collaboration skills, see <http://www.detroitfutureschools.org/toolkit/>

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the
Personal to the Theoretical

Defining the Prison Industrial Complex

20 MIN

Facilitator transitions the group:

Since the 1980s, the prison system in the U.S. has grown exponentially, such that the U.S. has more people incarcerated than any other country in the world. Some people call this system the prison industrial complex because it is much more than just prisons or jails. Let's brainstorm what each of these words mean: Prison, Industrial, and Complex.

Facilitator writes the words and then asks for ideas:

Prison: What are the types of imprisonment in society? (Prisons, jails, detention centers, juvenile halls, drug rehabilitation centers, schools, low-wage jobs, group homes, shelters...)



Industrial: What are the forms of industry that relate to prisons? Who is making their living based on prisons? (Policing, lawyers, phone companies, food companies, construction companies, politicians, security and surveillance industries, healthcare industry, border patrol, private prison corporations...)

Complex: What does this word mean? Where else do we hear it? (Complicated, many layers, not simple or one thing, housing/business complex, multiple related things grouped together...)

Based on our brainstorm, would anyone like to try to define the prison industrial complex?

After a few responses, the facilitator shares the definition provided by Critical Resistance (either projected or in a handout) and participants are asked to compare it to the group's ideas:

“The prison industrial complex (PIC) is a term we use to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.”

What are they missing? What are we missing?

What do we gain by thinking of it as the “prison industrial complex,” and not just “prison”? ■

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Identifying the Problems

25 MIN

Facilitator transitions the group:

The previous definition says, “as solutions to economic, social and political problems.”

We are going to unpack this a little more.

We need to ask, what are these problems?

Who are they problems for? And who do the solutions help or hurt? We are going to look at an example of each of these, and then think

through alternative interpretations of these problems.

Facilitator Note: The following can be done in a large group or in small groups. For groups who have some familiarity with these concepts we recommend small groups. If these are new ideas, the large group will work better.

Alternately, the group can work with the [Concentric Circles worksheet](#) to look at different impacts of the PIC.

Hand out or project the PIC Narrative worksheets. Choose one to focus on to begin.

[Economic problem Worksheet:](#) In the Central Valley of California there is high unemployment and certain areas of land are not profitable agriculturally. [Read more about this issue at knottedline.com](#)

[Social Problem Worksheet:](#) Violence in schools. [Read more about this issue at knottedline.com](#)

[Political Problem Worksheet:](#) Shifting demographics of voting populations (increasingly younger, people of color and immigrants). [Read more about this issue at knottedline.com](#)

Go through the Dominant Narrative column. What is missing, what maybe doesn't fit?

For each line, ask participants to offer ideas for the Flip the Script column as well.

If people are working on their own or in small groups, participants can use the links above for more information on their problem

Share out what groups have come up with.

How are these “solutions”?

Who do they benefit?

Finish with reflections from 2-3 people:

What is the most important or surprising thing you learned today? ■



SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Make sheets of flipchart paper with alphabet written in two vertical columns (one column on left side, one down the middle)
- The number of sheets is based on splitting the group into teams of 8-10.
- Prep art or media supplies.

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners
Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Alphabet Race - Solutionaries

20 MIN

Brainstorm on a board or flipchart: What is a "crisis"? (A difficult or dangerous situation that has reached a critical phase and requires serious attention.)

Now consider the following numbers:

1 in 3 black men born today will be incarcerated in their lifetime.

In 2009, California spent \$8,736 per student and \$47,102 per adult inmate.

Between 1979 and 2009, the number of women incarcerated increased by 831%.

By 2010, nearly 400,000 people were deported yearly.

The amount of people incarcerated, on parole or probation is equal to the combined populations of Los Angeles, Chicago and Boston.

The facilitator writes PIC in a circle and then asks:

How is the PIC creating a crisis in the US? Around the circle, the facilitator records participant responses.

The facilitator transitions the group:

Now we are going to imagine the transformation of that crisis.

Divide the group into teams of 8-10.

Each team lines up in a single line with the person in the front of the line facing a flipchart paper with the alphabet written on it. Teams should be the same distance away from the wall. The first person in each team's line has a marker.

The facilitator explains the rules:

This is a race. When I say go, the first player will run up to the paper and write a solution to the crisis created by the PIC that begins with the letter A.

As soon as they are finished they hand the marker off to the next person before heading to the back of the line. The next person runs up to the paper and has to think of a solution that begins with B and so on. There is no cutting the line or skipping letters, but teammates can help each other with ideas.

The facilitator calls STOP when the first team reaches the end of the alphabet. Each team then walks around to view all the other responses and stop in front of another team's alphabet. For each alphabet, someone should give one response that was interesting or inspiring and one that they have a question about. The authors of those responses should respond to the questions.

Any other general reflections or themes that you notice? ■

This activity is adapted from the [Hurricane Season Curriculum](#).

Future Artifacts

25 MIN

Facilitator transitions the group:

We are going to dig a little deeper now and bring some of these solutions more into focus.

Participants divide into groups of 3-4.

The facilitator sets up the scenario:

"Imagine it is 50 years in the future and you



are a historian. You've just discovered a key artifact that helped end the prison industrial complex. For example, maybe you found a letter from a movement leader that outlined their political strategy or a photo from a meeting, or glasses that made visible the impacts of the PIC everywhere, or a lotion that heals the trauma of imprisonment, or a hologram that allows families to stay in contact even when incarcerated. You can use the alphabet race to give you ideas too, but **imagine big! Don't worry about technical limitations, invent something totally new.**

Hand out the material of your choice. This can be done simply with pencil/pens and paper but the ideas often expand when there are multiple options for participants to work with. For a shortened time-frame, media like clay, found/recycled materials, drawing and short skits work well. If you have extended time, you could use media like stop motion videos, photography, green screens with photoshop, or linocut prints. ■

Conclusion Report Back Findings

10 MIN

Participants reconvene in one large group and place artifacts on tables. Everyone walks around to view the other artifacts. Groups should share briefly about their artifacts and answer any questions.

Facilitator Note: Make sure to document the final pieces! ■

This is adapted from a workshop developed for Yerba Buena Center's Young Artists at Work program by Evan Bissell.

Making Media Critically



FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Media is “constructed.” Media messages are shaped by the ideologies and interests of the media makers and their values and points of view are embedded within the media they make.

Media is a powerful tool for maintaining, changing, controlling, challenging, or expanding people’s understandings of the world around them. It has also been central to resistance movements and imagining more liberated worlds.

Media plays a key role in shaping the way identities such as gender, race, class, and sexuality are formed and enacted in society.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What story do you want to tell?
How can media makers transform a dominant narrative?

GOALS

Participants will explore U.S. history through the lens of resistance and oppression.

Participants will develop a deeper understanding of the role and purpose of media in society.

Participants will build their media literacy—the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms.

Participants will explore ways that media has been used as a form of resistance to counter dominant narratives.

LENGTH OF TIME

Two 55-minute sessions

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review [Spiral Curriculum Power of Advertising](#) workshop
- Explore Hank Willis Thomas's [photographic works](#)
- Review Global Action Project's [Media in Action Curriculum](#)

MATERIALS

- [Power Words list](#)
- [Flipping the Story](#) Worksheet
- Project and access to [Flipping the Story](#) and [Media from the Dominant Culture](#).
- [PDF of slideshows](#) if no computer access
- [Clip from the documentary Century of Self](#)
- Magazines, construction paper, permanent markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue sticks.

SESSION 1

PREPARATION

- [Pre-load this clip](#) (9:00 - 14:10) and the slideshows [Flipping the Story](#) and [Media from the Dominant Culture](#).
- Print out: [Power Word list](#) and [Flipping the Story Worksheet](#) (and [PDF of slideshows](#) if no computer access).

1 Personal Connection & Reflection,
Developing the Reason to Learn

Who do you love?

15 MIN

Each participant takes a few moments to write an answer to the following: What is a brand that you identify strongly with? Why? When did this begin?

Next, [play the clip](#) (9:00 - 14:10) about the invention of marketing, focusing on Edward Bernays and cigarettes from the documentary "Century of Self."

The facilitator initiates discussion:

What happened?

What was the ideology that Bernays was appealing to? (ex. Independent and daring

women, patriotism, cigarettes are attractive)
How did Bernays use media to frame a story about smoking?

Think back about the brand that you identify with. What are the ideologies that the brand appeals to? ■

2 Develop the Concept, Move from the Personal to the Theoretical

Flipping the Script

30 MIN

Facilitator transitions the group:

Now we are going to analyze different pieces of media from the "Dominant Culture" and how people have "flipped" or innovated on them. Check for understanding of Dominant Culture (viewpoint, needs, customs, laws etc that reflect those who hold the most power).

Hand out the [Power Word list](#) and [Flipping the Story Worksheet](#) and check for understanding if participants haven't worked with the power words before:

We will be using the Power Words list to help us identify the ideologies that are in the media and make connections between the different works.

Participants then begin working with the [Media from the the Dominant Culture](#) and [Flipping the Story](#) slideshows (digitally or as [PDF](#)) to fill in the worksheet. Participants should take time to explore the media before beginning the worksheet.

As participants finish the worksheet, ask participants to share and explain some of the connections they made. ■

3 Active Experimentation with New Knowledge and Concepts

Other People's Projects

10 MIN

Facilitator transitions the group:

Now that we've looked at these examples, what are examples of songs, books, movies, art that you like that "flips the script"?

Collect a bunch of responses. If there is a particularly popular example, focus on it and unpack it with the following questions:

How are they transforming dominant culture stories, images or ideas to "flip" the story?

Who do you think the intended audience is?

**What is the ideology they are responding to?
What is their message? ■**

jotting down quick notes if needed:

What is the story or issue you are interested in and passionate about?

What are the forms of media that the story is told in?

What are the power words that inform how this story gets told?

Now think about your own experience with this story or issue. What expertise and experience do you bring in order to tell a different story? ■

SESSION 2

PREPARATION

- Magazines, construction paper, permanent markers, scissors, glue sticks, colored pencils or computers and printers

Facilitator Note: If your group has experience with image editing programs, video editing or other digital forms, this is a great opportunity to build on this

- Access to past participant examples if needed: [Flipping the Story participant work](#) created with The Knotted Line.

4 Integration of Concepts & Experience, Learners
Representing New Knowledge in their Own Voice

Identification of an Issue

10 MIN

Facilitator introduces the topic:

What is a story told in the media that is meaningful to you? Think back to the examples from the previous workshop—representations of Native youth, racial profiling... etc. What is an issue or story that you want to "flip"?

Participants should reflect on the following,

Flipping the Story

35 MIN

Facilitator introduces the next steps:

Now we are going to experiment and play with flipping the story. Using magazines, the internet or your memory, find a specific piece of media that relates to the issue you are passionate about. Using the available materials, you should either 1) alter the language or image of the piece of media you found, or 2) create a new piece of media. Whatever you choose, your goal is to flip the dominant culture story that is in the original piece of media you are responding to.

If needed, participants can view the following [examples created by people working with the Knotted Line.](#) ■

Closing

10 MIN

Share out a few examples, asking participants how they would create a polished version if they had more time.

Facilitator Note: If you are doing this as part of the Flipping the Script Project, this exercise gives participants an opportunity to play and make mistakes). ■

Flipping the Script

Making History with Media



What follows is a suggestion on how to use The Knotted Line curriculum for an extended research and creative media project. In high school classroom settings this has often taken place as an end of the year project.

The range of materials and media used to create the final works is extremely flexible and based on your time and capacity. In the past, participants have created short audio clips, songs, board games, playing cards, digital collages, books, paintings, videos and more. Many of these forms have come through participants' interest, not through the decision of the facilitators.

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Different understandings are revealed when history is studied chronologically compared to when it is studied by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time.

Historical narratives are often framed by "the winner" or dominant society, and bury other stories. Anyone can be a part of creating and uncovering the other stories.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does the past live in the present?
What is the story that you will tell?

GOALS

Participants will explore U.S. history through the lens of resistance and oppression.

Participants will develop critical thinking around who tells history.

Participants will see themselves as active authors of history.

Participants will expand their understanding of the connections between history and the present.

LENGTH OF TIME

4 hours per week, 4 to 6 weeks

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with the workshop sequence.
- Collect materials and resources that can support participant choices and ideas for the form of their final projects.

MATERIALS

- See materials in each workshop
- Additional materials based on the form of the final projects

WEEK 1

Project Introduction & Overview:

In this project we will be asking the question: How does the past live in the present? We will also be asking you to think about the story you want to tell about this, because you will be making media about it. Through research and working with a project called The Knotted Line, you will create media pieces about a topic of your choosing.

Show participants The Knotted Line.

This is the project that we will be working with. You will also have the opportunity to submit your final pieces to the The Knotted Line in the end.

Go through the following workshops from this guide:

- [Defining Power, Developing Language](#)
- [Whose Freedom? Our Freedom!](#)

WEEK 2

Go through the following workshops from this guide:

- [Media Analysis](#)
- [Making Media Critically](#)

Participants should identify a topic of choice by the next session.

WEEK 3

Go through the following workshops from this guide:

- [Entering the Knotted Line](#)
- [Exploring the Knotted Line](#)

Participants come to this session with a topic of interest already chosen. This topic will be the subject of their further study and to construct the x-y axis in the second half of Exploring the Knotted Line.

- Participants should review the following examples of [Flipping the Script participant work](#) and begin thinking about the form and focus of their final project by filling out the Project Pitch below.

WEEK 4-6

Project Pitch

- Participants each present their 30 second "elevator pitch" to the rest of the group
- A sample script, one sentence each:
- My project is about _____ (x-moment or theme of interest).
- It connects _____ (historical y-moment) and _____ (historical y-moment 2).
- I will use _____ (materials/mediums) to create my project.

Continue research as needed

Depending on time and style of your classroom/group, this may be better done in class or as homework/independent work.

Create the work!

Artist statement

Participants should create a brief artist statement that:

- Identifies the transhistorical elements of their project.
- Explains why they chose their medium.
- Describes how the project has impacted them.

Celebration and sharing.

This is an important way to make real the claim that the participants are media makers and historical authors. It makes their work accountable to the public as well.

Invite parents, community members, teachers.

- Art exhibit
- Performance
- Publication
- Submit pieces to The Knotted Line!

Historical Fiction

Time Travel

Penpals Across Time & Space



What follows is a suggestion on how to integrate The Knotted Line when paired with a novel or historical fiction. It was originally developed by Oakland educator Liza Gesuden for working with the science fiction novel *Kindred* by Octavia Butler. The project can work with any literature, but *The Knotted Line* and *Kindred* share a particularly strong conceptual relationship.

In the project, each participant develops a fictional character from a different time period. Participants, as their character, then write letters to each other speaking to the connections and differences in their respective times as they deal with a conflict, question or problem. By the end of the project participants have exchanged a series of letters in a transhistorical dialogue.

FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS

Different understandings are revealed when history is studied chronologically compared to when it is studied by the relationships between events/forces/themes throughout time.

Art, media, and culture can produce counter-narratives that reshape how we see the world.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does the past shape who we are today?
What can we learn about one time period by looking at another?

GOALS

Participants will explore ways that creative writing and historical research can produce counter-narratives.

Participants will see themselves as active authors of history.

Participants will expand their understanding of the connections between different historical time periods.

LENGTH OF TIME

4 hours per week, 4 to 6 weeks

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

14-23

IDEAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

15-30

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with the workshop sequence.

MATERIALS

- See materials in each workshop

SEQUENCE

WEEK 1

Introduce the project overview before participants begin reading the book:

Facilitator:

In this project, each of you will develop a character from a different time period. Working in pairs, you will write letters back and forth from the perspective of these characters. By the end of the project you will exchange a series of letters about a problem or question.

Show knottedline.com:

We will be working with The Knotted Line and your book to identify and research the moments which your characters are from.

Go through the following workshops from this guide:

- [Defining Power, Developing Language](#)
- [Entering the Knotted Line](#)

Facilitator Note: As participants read the book, the POWER words can be applied to analysis of the reading. This can be done through warm-up activities or by keeping notes such as the following:

POWER WORD:	
How do you see this in the book? List examples below:	Where do you see it in your own life? List examples below:

WEEK 2

Go through the following workshops from this guide:

- [Timeline of Resistance](#)
- [Exploring the Knotted Line](#)

Facilitator Note: During this workshop, participants will form pairs and choose a POWER word that they see in the book. They then use this POWER word to guide the construction of their X-Y axis.

Each person will choose a moment from their Y-axis to create a character from. The time period can be from the book or not, but they should not be from the same time. Use the final hour of working time to deepen research on the chosen historical moments.

WEEK 3

Character Development

Read through [Michaela's sample letters](#) created with this project (9th grade, Oakland, CA).

Participants use the [Character Sketch worksheet](#) and their research from the previous session to develop their characters. They may need to do more research here.

Some things for writers to remember:

- The characters are speaking from their historical moment—what are the details and environment of that time period? How can you make the “voice” appropriate by use of language? What does someone in 1973 know that someone in 1863 doesn't?
- Think about your character's physical appearance, personality, relationships, hopes, fears, dreams, etc. Don't list them—how have they influenced who this person is? Be specific!

Introduce and go over [the letter rubric](#).

Begin letter writing. This can be done in meeting time or as additional work depending on the time needed to read and discuss the book as well. Only one person in the pair will be writing at a time so you will have to stagger the letter writing with another activity. Instructions for pairs:

First Letter (partner 1)

In your first letter, you should introduce the issue or problem you are facing. The problem should be connected to your historical moment. Ask for advice, pose a question. Remember, you may not know who you are writing to or anything about their time period.

Second Letter (partner 2)

Respond to the first letter—imagine you just received a letter from 200 years ago at home. What would you say or do? Do you have a shared problem or experience? Pose questions back, keep the conversation growing.

Keep the correspondence going until you have a total ___# of letters.

By the end of the project, you should have a total ___# of letters exchanged between your characters.

WEEK 4+

Continue the letter writing, staggered throughout the reading of the book. Use the book to help parallel the developing character and complexity of the letter writers. What unexpected things come up, what secrets or needs are revealed?

Reading/Publishing

The letters present a great opportunity to share the work publicly or within the group. Some possibilities:

- Pairs record videos or audio of themselves reading their letters
- Pairs do a reading of their letters in a theatrical set up
- A zine or booklet is printed with the collection of the whole group's letters, organized in penpal pairs

Art extension note: At the high school where this project was originally developed, it was also integrated in the visual arts class. Students used [Kara Walker's silhouette work](#) as a model to create their own paper cut-out silhouettes relating to a specific moment chosen from their letters or the book.



An Infinity of Traces

A college-level
final project



What follows is an assignment for a college-level course working with The Knotted Line. This was created with Dr. Victoria Robinson for her Introduction to Ethnic Studies "Abolition Pedagogy" course at UC Berkeley with over 60 students. The following was given to students as their final project for the course and can be done in groups or as an individual project. The percentages refer to the grading scheme used by Professor Robinson.

"The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical processes to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory."

-Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks (1929-1935)

In his famous book *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1978) shares that, "The only available translation inexplicably leaves Gramsci's comment at that, whereas in fact Gramsci's text concludes by saying, 'therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory.'" With its 50 paintings, *The Knotted Line* depicts the history of colonization, Christian hegemony,

slavery, the birth and growth of the prison system, criminalization and immigration. When you dig deeper, each painting reveals lists of historical facts. There are both acts of oppression—for example, the imprisonment of 19 Hopi men on Alcatraz in 1895 for refusing to send their children to boarding school—and self-determination, such as the occupation of Alcatraz by over fifty Native American tribes over seventy years later.

The work attempts to create a "web" of history, a "mosaic-like history" which entangles around itself, creating an intimacy through time, asking for us to understand our relationships to history, others and ourselves. This assignment will require you to add to this interactive online project. The steps for this assignment are as follows:



STEP ONE

Establish a Google Doc for your Knotted Line assignment.

Review the following slideshow:
[Entering the Knotted Line](#)

View the following video <http://player.vimeo.com/video/50184018>

Write a one-page reflection on these, sharing what comments, analysis, philosophy, or approach will inform your contribution to The Knotted Line. (5%)

STEP TWO X-axis

Choose a moment from the paintings on The Knotted Line (the paintings and silhouettes comprise the X-axis of The Knotted Line). Choose a thematic lens for your work, for example: the environment, gender, sexuality, economics, or class. In your Google Doc, explain the moment you chose in no more than one page, analyzing it through your thematic lens. (5%)

STEP THREE Y-axis

Using your thematic analysis as a lens, conduct research on four moments that have a conceptual relationship (Y-axis) to your chosen moment (X-axis). When researching and choosing these moments, note: 1. The moments should not already be in The Knotted Line; 2. Two should be moments of "Actions of Self-Determination" (when have people fought for things central to your X-axis?) and two should be moments of the "Redesign of Oppression" (how have the same forms of oppression present in your X-axis moment shown up at other times in history?). In your Google Doc, explain/create a "conceptual relation

ship" based on your chosen thematic lens between your Y-axis and your chosen X-axis moment. (15%)

STEP FOUR Z-axis

Create an original media piece about your X- and Y-axis. The work should demonstrate a clear analysis of the conceptual relationship of these moments and illuminate new angles of connection and understanding. The media piece can be:

Audio (2-5 minutes total): Poems, edits of found audio, music, etc.

Video (2-5 minutes total): Short doc, creative piece, interviews, found footage, etc.

Photo essay or artwork (5-10 original pieces) embedded in a Prezi (see prezi.com)

(65%)

STEP FIVE Z-axis continued

In light of Gramsci's quote above, how has this process impacted how you view your relationship to the history of the PIC? To history in general? What "traces" did you uncover for yourself? (10%) ■

APPENDIX OF COMMON CORE STANDARDS

WORKSHOP 1 Defining Power, Developing Language

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

WORKSHOP 2 Media Analysis Basics

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 3 Whose Freedom? Our Freedom!

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 4 Entering the Knotted Line

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.5**

Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 5**Exploring the Knotted Line****CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2**

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of

information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 6**Whose Constitution****CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1**

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent

understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 7

Timeline of Resistance

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

WORKSHOP 8

Artifacts from the End of the Prison Industrial Complex

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of

information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

WORKSHOP 9

Making Media Critically

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.



The Power Words List

TERM	DEFINITION
PRISON-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX	The shared web of interests of government, private business, and individuals that makes prison, surveillance & militarization an economic, social and politically driven industry.
PATRIARCHY	System where men hold power
FEMINISM	Pushing for women's rights (equality, etc.)
SEXISM	System of oppression based on sex and gender
RACISM	System of oppression based on skin color and/or culture
CLASSISM	System of oppression based on social class (rich and poor)
IMMIGRATION	Leaving a home country to settle in another one
SELF-DETERMINATION	The ability to make decisions for your own life
RE-IMAGINATION	Imagining how something existing could be different
SOVEREIGNTY	Supreme power or authority
LIBERATION	The act of becoming free (meaning you were once unfree)

TERM

DEFINITION

OPPRESSION
(INTERNALIZED AND
EXTERNAL)

Internalized: holding yourself down (I'm not good enough)
External: someone holding you down or back

COLONIALISM

Take over another's land, by force, by religion, by culture... for the purpose of stealing their resources

NEOCOLONIALISM

Controlling someone's land at a distance... indirect rule

HOMOPHOBIA

Fear of people and actions that aren't straight

MILITARISM

Using military thinking and means to deal with any situation

ASSIMILATION

Changing ones culture, actions or appearance to fit mainstream

WHITE SUPREMACY

When being white is seen as normal and/or best

XENOPHOBIA

Fear of difference

ABUSE

A violent, misuse of someone or something (verbal, physical, sexual...)

MATERIALISM

When 'things' are the most important aspect of society or a person's life

AGENCY

One's ability to act in a situation or society

SUBVERSIVE

Overthrowing, challenging, critiquing authority

Power in the World Worksheet

NAME _____

Identify a problem in society that your community is affected by and describe it below

What words from the Power Words list related to this problem?
(positive and negative)

Explain why and how these words connected to the problem.

Power Words Assignment

NAME

WHAT IS POWER?

Power is the ability to make action happen.

Power can be negative or positive. **Power** is the ability to make action happen.

Power appears in every level of human life: public, personal and internal.

Power can be visible or hidden/invisible.

Power is not just between people, there can be power in institutions, knowledge, customs or beliefs.

INSTRUCTIONS

Read through the list of "Power Words." These are words that describe different things having to do with how power works in our lives.

Ask at least one person in your family or a friend outside of this class the questions below.

1) Which of these words are you familiar with? Write those words here with the definition from the list.

2 Are any of these words describing something that you experience or think is important in your own life? If so, which ones? Why?

Write your person's answer here:

NAME

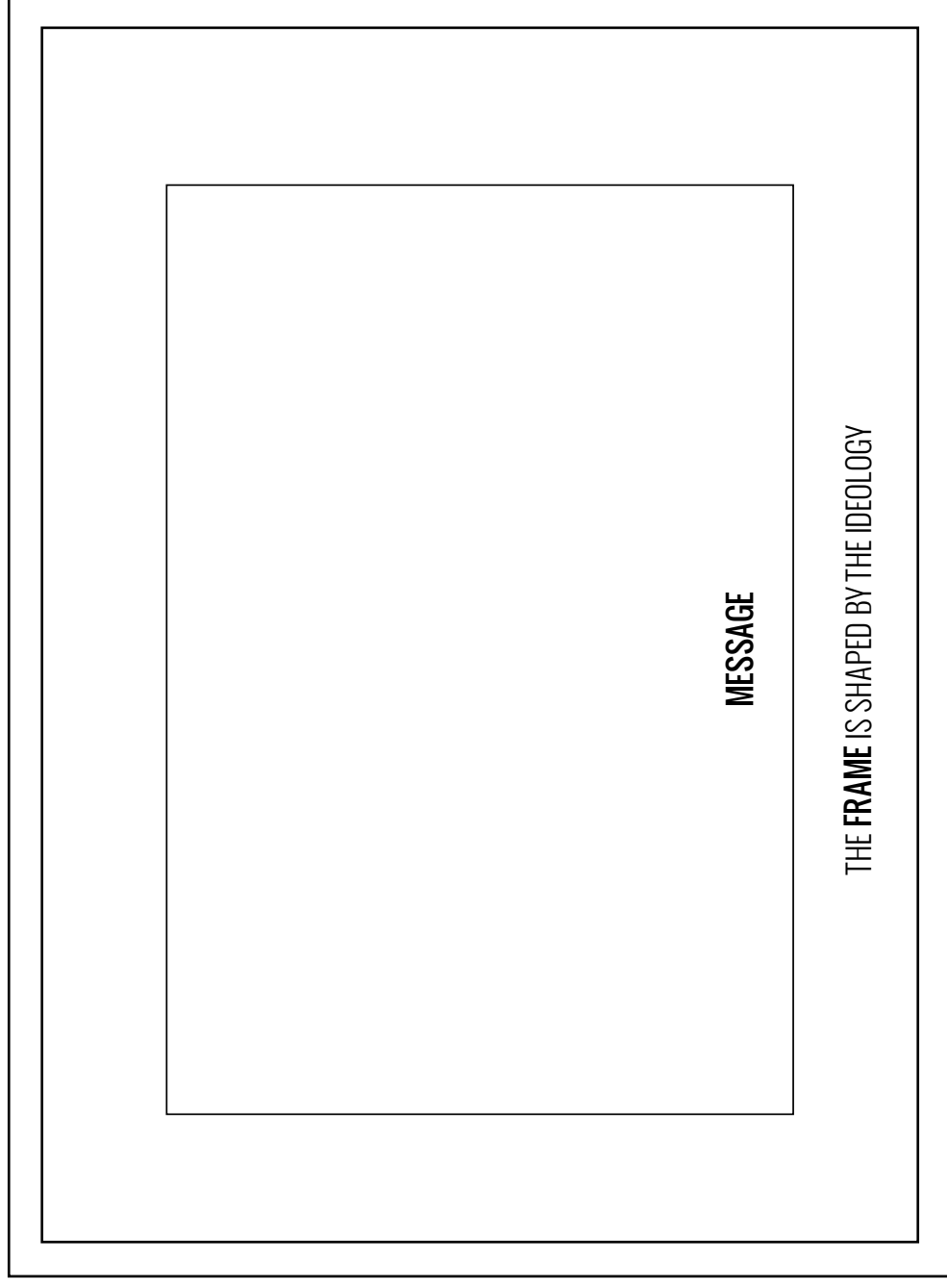
Media Framing Worksheet

The Frame defines what you are looking at just as an actual frame would when placed round a picture

Ideology is a set of beliefs, ideas or values that come from the people creating the media. When it comes to media, ideology frames the message - it dictates what is included within the frame. It guides what or who we include in the piece, and how issues are represented or presented.

DIRECTIONS

1. Choose an image from the Power words images.
2. Start with the message. Answer the following questions in the Message section of the diagram below:
 - a. What/ Who is included?
 - b. What is happening?
 - c. How is the issue represented? (positive/ negative/dreamy/chaotic?)
 - d. Who/ what is not included
 - e. What is the message you get from the image ?
3. In the frame, write Power words that you think shape the ideology that frames this media.



This worksheet is adapted from Global Action Project's Media Framing Worksheet

NAME _____

NAME OF PARTNERS _____

APPLYING THE POWER WORDS

Using them to analyze media images

Spend 5 minutes exploring the media samples in the packet you received.
Choose 2-3 images that you find interesting.
For each image answer the following:

Media Image 1

1. Describe this piece of media

What/who is in the frame?

What/who is left outside the frame- that you can't see?

Who is involved in this issue/event but isn't included?

What isn't included but might actually be relevant?

What is the message? What story is being told?

What ideology- beliefs/values/views- are shaping this message?

2. Review the Power Words list. Choose at least THREE Power Words from the list that relate to this piece of media. How does each word relate to the media you're analyzing?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Media Image 2

1. Describe this piece of media

What/who is in the frame?

What/who is left outside the frame- that you can't see?

Who is involved in this issue/event but isn't included?

What isn't included but might actually be relevant?

What is the message? What story is being told?

What ideology- beliefs/values/views- are shaping this message?

2. Review the Power Words list. Choose at least THREE Power Words from the list that relate to this piece of media. How does each word relate to the media you're analyzing?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Media Image 2

1. Describe this piece of media

What/who is in the frame?

What/who is left outside the frame- that you can't see?

Who is involved in this issue/event but isn't included?

What isn't included but might actually be relevant?

What is the message? What story is being told?

What ideology- beliefs/values/views- are shaping this message?

2. Review the Power Words list. Choose at least THREE Power Words from the list that relate to this piece of media. How does each word relate to the media you're analyzing?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

What I have come to understand about 'Freedom' in the United States is that it is rarely defined by what it is. Throughout history, it is more often defined by what it is not. At different times in history certain people are free to own property and work (slaves are not), certain people are free to vote (women are not), certain people can come and go from the country freely (immigrants can not), certain people can get married (queer people can not), certain people can worship anywhere (Muslims can not)...

Race, class, gender, citizenship and sexuality are constantly changing ways that people are excluded or included in the U.S. version of Freedom. The way Freedom is talked about in the U.S. does not define what freedom is; instead it defines who has access to different types of freedom, and by that measure, who does not.

Access to 'freedom' has to do with power. Those who are free are those who have the most access to the major institutions of our society - political (politicians, law, courts), economic (banks, loans), educational (schools, access to college), cultural (creators of tv, movies), etc. For the most part, though not always, that has historically placed the white, straight, Christian, wealthy, male members of our society with the most access to freedom. From the first reservation systems for native americans to slavery, from the Patriot Act to the detention of immigrants, defining freedom by confining "others" has been a central part of how society in the United States is organized.

Evan Bissell

Freedom in the U.S. Two Viewpoints

“Now when I was waiting tables, washing dishes, or mowing lawns for money, I never thought of myself as stuck in some station in life. I was on my own path, my own journey, an American journey, where I could think for myself, decide for myself, define happiness for myself. That is what we do in this country. That is the American dream. That’s freedom and I will take it any day over the supervision and sanctimony of the central planners. “

Vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan
Republican National Convention, August 29, 2012



“What I have come to understand about ‘Freedom’ in the United States is that it is rarely defined by what it is. Throughout history, it is more often defined by what it is not. At different times in history certain people are free to own property and work (slaves are not), certain people are free to vote (women are not), certain people can come and go from the country freely (immigrants can not), certain people can get married (queer people can not), certain people can worship anywhere (Muslims can not)...

Race, class, gender, citizenship, and sexuality are constantly changing ways that people are excluded or included in the U.S. version of Freedom. The way Freedom is talked about in the U.S. does not define what freedom is; instead it defines who has access to different types of freedom, and by that measure, who does not.”

Creator of The Knotted Line, Evan Bissell

Notes on Freedom

RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM

What was the event?
(include date, who was involved,
where)

Using your definition of freedom,
how does this event show a
“restriction of freedom”?



Freedom is...

SELF-DETERMINATION

What was the event?
(include date, who was involved,
where)

Using your definition of freedom,
how does this event show
“self-determination”?

Actions for Self-Determination

Describe two moments that relate to your X-moment and chosen POWER words.

NAME _____

1 _____

Y-MOMENTS

2 _____

Choose one moment and 3 POWER words that relate to it.

X MOMENT

1 _____

2 _____

Redesigning Oppression

Describe two moments that relate to your X-moment and chosen POWER words.

NAME _____

DESCRIBE Who is in the painting, what is happening, where are they?

RESEARCH What is this moment about? When did it happen? What questions do you have?

POWER WORDS Choose three related Power Words. How does each one connect to this moment? (1 sentence ea.)

1.

2.

3.

Iceberg Worksheet

NAME _____

THINGS ABOUT YOURSELF THAT ARE VISIBLE TO OTHERS
TOP OF ICEBERG

RECENT EVENTS/LAWS/ PEOPLE THAT HAVE AFFECTED YOUR LIFE
ALONG THE WATER

PAST EVENTS/LAWS/PEOPLE THAT AFFECT YOUR LIFE TODAY
IN THE ICEBERG

THE KNOTTED LINE

NAME

Evidence Card

Y-Moment

EVIDENCE Quotation or description of media

SOURCE INFO

Article Title:

Author:

Website Title:

Organization:

CONTEXT Who is the speaker? What is the topic being discussed? Any other necessary background info?

RESEARCH What is this moment about? When did it happen? What questions do you have?

Evidence Card

Y-Moment

EVIDENCE Quotation or description of media

SOURCE INFO

Article Title:

Author:

Website Title:

Organization:

CONTEXT Who is the speaker? What is the topic being discussed? Any other necessary background info?

RESEARCH What is this moment about? When did it happen? What questions do you have?

NAME

Evidence Card

X-Moment

EVIDENCE Quotation or description
of media

SOURCE INFO

Article Title:

Author:

Website Title:

Organization:

CONTEXT Who is the speaker? What is the topic being discussed? Any other necessary background info?

RESEARCH What is this moment about? When did it happen? What questions do you have?

Evidence Card

X-Moment

EVIDENCE Quotation or description
of media

SOURCE INFO

Article Title:

Author:

Website Title:

Organization:

CONTEXT Who is the speaker? What is the topic being discussed? Any other necessary background info?

RESEARCH What is this moment about? When did it happen? What questions do you have?



Timeline of Resistance

Based on the Knotted Line by Evan Bissell
www.knottedline.com

Compiled for a workshop designed by Josh Healey

1493: Columbus returns to the island of Hispaniola (modern-day Haiti and Dominican Republic) on his second trip -- and find his fort destroyed and all 40 Spanish soldiers dead. It's believed that the Taino native people killed them after the soldiers attacked their communities, stole resources, and raped women. The Taino Chief, Hatuey, escapes to Cuba to warn the people there of the Spanish invasion and leads a three-month fight against the Spanish fort there.

1650: John Eliot establishes the first "praying town" to "convert and civilize" Native people in North America. The town included rules of conduct (individual house-holding, no intimacy without marriage, no idleness and no long hair) and a translated version of the Bible. Every single tribe across the continent resists this form of "civilization."

1663: Black slaves and indentured whites in Gloucester, Virginia, plot an inter-racial rebellion against the plantations owners. They are overthrown and their leaders are hanged, but they plant the seed for future rebellions led by Nat Turner and John Brown.

1788: The U.S. Constitution is ratified: Slaves are defined as three-fifths of a human being. Persons without property, women, and anyone who's not a Protestant white man can't vote.

1851: Sojourner Truth, an escaped slave who became a leader both the anti-slavery movement and the women's movement, delivers her most famous speech at the Woman's Convention in Ohio, entitled "Ain't I a Woman?"

1865: The 13th Amendment is passed, **abolishing slavery except in the case of imprisonment.** In that same year, the sharecropping system is developed in the South, ensuring the continuation of cotton production and cheap labor.

1867: After being forced to work through the winter, Chinese railroad laborers strike for an increase in wages and a shorter, 10-hour work day. They also object to being whipped and being restrained from leaving and looking for other employment. The railroad responded by cutting off provisions and food, wiring east for African American workers and hiring a white posse to intimidate the workers, trapping the strikers in their mountain camps in the California Sierra Nevada and ending the strike in one week.

1877: After the Civil War, Reconstruction fails in the South and racist Jim Crow laws take hold. These laws criminalize black life by making it illegal to change jobs without permission, be a vagrant, ride freight cars without a ticket, engage in sexual activity or talk loudly with white women. Despite no evidence of crime increase by black people, thousands of random black citizens are imprisoned. Western states pass laws that criminalize Asian and Native Americans.

1879: The first Indian boarding school opens in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, becoming the model for 26 similar schools with the stated rationale to "kill the Indian and save the man." More than 100,000 Native children are forced into various state schools.

1886: A coalition of European immigrant workers, socialists, and anarchists organize the first May Day protest in Chicago and call for the eight-hour work day. A bomb explodes in the crowd -- no one knows who sets it off -- and 4 people are killed. May Day becomes an international holiday for workers rights, now celebrated in every country across the world... except the United States, where it doesn't happen again until Mexican immigrants and allies rally again on May Day starting in 2006.

1917: Three years after founding the United Negro Improvement Association in Jamaica, Marcus Garvey sets up the first chapter in New York City. The most popular black organization in the world at that time advocates for repatriation of Black people to Africa.



1917: Alice Paul, Lucy Burns and other women suffragists are imprisoned for protesting for the right to vote. When they go on hunger strike to protest the conditions of their imprisonment, they are force fed. Paul states: "We are being imprisoned not because we have obstructed traffic, but because we pointed out to the President the fact that he was obstructing the cause of democracy at home, while Americans were fighting for it abroad." Women finally win the right to vote with the 20th amendment passing in 1919.

1946: Thomas Estrada, William Guzman, Gonzalo Mendez, Frank Palomino, and Lorenzo Ramirez, all Mexican-American fathers, win *Westminster v. Mendez*, a case that challenged the practice of school segregation. They claim that their children, along with 5,000 other children of "Mexican" ancestry, are victims of unconstitutional discrimination by being forced to attend separate "schools for Mexicans" in Orange County. The case sends ripples through the state when judges repealed the remaining segregationist provisions in the California statutes.

1954: *Brown v. Board of Education* - The Supreme Court declares that separate facilities (including segregated schools) are inherently unequal, and therefore illegal. This is the first major victory of the modern civil rights movement.

1960: African-American college students perform the first sit-in in Greensboro, North Carolina, galvanizing student action across the country and leading to the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

1962: White college students form the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and issue their manifesto, the Port Huron Statement. SDS becomes the leading activist group for primarily white students in the 1960s, starting with civil rights activism and ultimately protesting the Vietnam War and U.S. imperialism later on.

1964: Freedom Schools are set up across Mississippi, Alabama, and the Deep South as

part of the larger Freedom Summer civil rights campaign. These schools were created and taught by black college students as an alternative to Mississippi's totally segregated and underfunded school system. Over the course of the summer, more than 3,500 students attended Freedom Schools which taught subjects that the public schools avoided such as black history and constitutional rights.

1964: Free Speech Movement: In the largest mass arrest in history, police arrest 800 college protesters at UC Berkeley's Sproul Plaza. The sit-in was part of three months of student rebellion against the university's decision to limit the activities of civil rights and political groups on the campus.

1966: Led by Cesar Chavez and Larry Itliong, Mexican and Filipino farmworkers join together to create the United Farm Workers, the first-ever successful union in the fields of the California valley. Their first campaign is the grape boycott, where they led a national boycott of the big grape companies who refused to negotiate with the workers. After five years of hard struggle, the UFW finally won.

1966: Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, students at Merritt College in Oakland, form the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. They become famous for their armed patrols of cops in West Oakland ("policing the police.") They also start Survival Programs, such as Free Breakfast for Kids and Free Health Clinics. The Panthers start revolutionary chapters across the country and spread quickly, but are met with massive violence and intimidation from local police and the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO program.

1968: The East Los Angeles Walkouts (aka the Chicano Blowouts) were a series of 1968 protests against unequal conditions in the LA public schools. The students who organized and carried out the protests were primarily concerned with school conditions and racism, but they were also spoke out against the high minority death toll in the Vietnam War and the ongoing campaigns of the larger Chicano Movement.

1968: Martin Luther King Jr.'s final campaign



before he is assassinated is to build a Poor People's Campaign. This was an effort to gain economic justice for all poor people in the United States, demanding human rights for poor Blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and Whites. After presenting an organized set of demands to Congress and the President, participants set up a 3000-person tent city on the Washington Mall, where they stayed for six weeks.

1969: Led by Richard Oakes, a Mohawk who directed the Indian Studies at San Francisco State College, and Grace Thorp, 78 Indians land on Alcatraz Island and occupy it. They claim the federal land for the American Indian Movement (AIM), and hold it for 2 months before they are evicted. More than 50 tribes gathered and declared that they would make the island a center for Native American Studies of Ecology.

1969: The first Black Studies program and the College of Ethnic Studies are created at San Francisco State, receiving official status only after a five-month strike by the Black Student Union, Third World Liberation Front and others. The same year, Berkeley High School becomes the first public high school in the country to have an African American Studies Department.

1969: The Stonewall Rebellion in New York City brings gay rights to national attention, and launches the queer liberation movement. The rebellion was a spontaneous, violent response to a police raid that took place at a major gay bar in NYC called the Stonewall Inn.

1971: A gang truce is organized by the Ghetto Brothers among the gangs of the South Bronx. At the meeting is Afrika Bambaataa, head of one of New York's largest gangs. Inspired by Zulu resistance to European colonization and a trip that he won to travel to Africa, Bambaataa begins throwing massively popular parties across turf lines and using the universal appeal of music to promote solidarity, respect, celebration and peace. Bambaataa becomes one of the founding DJ's of a new style of music called hip-hop, and the Universal Zulu Nation goes on to integrate much of

the Bronx and spread hip-hop culture across the world.

1991: 2Pac (son of a Black Panther, named after the Incan warrior Tupac Amaru) release his first album, 2Pacalypse Now. On the album, he addresses many social issues facing American society, such as racism, police brutality, poverty, and teenage pregnancy, giving a lyrical glimpse into the world of a young black man on the urban streets of the United States.

1994: In response to NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada), which allows corporations to take over ejidos (communally held lands) in Mexico, and centuries of oppression by the Mexican government, the Zapatista National Liberation Army EZLN occupies towns and ranches in the state of Chiapas. The Zapatistas declares autonomy of numerous indigenous towns, and begins to create a network of self-sufficiency, which they continue to this day.

1996: Major fights and race riots took place at Castlemont and Richmond High Schools. The next year another fight goes down at Skyline. In response, a coalition of Black, Latino, Asian-American, and other youth organizers came together to create an organization for multi-racial unity, peace, and justice. They created a space for students to come together to fight the true causes of oppression rather than each other. That organization: Youth Together.

1998: Critical Resistance, a powerful new national organization, is formed at a conference in Berkeley by Angela Davis, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, and former Black Panthers, creating a network of organizations dedicated to dismantling the prison-industrial complex and promoting holistic education and alternatives to prison.

2000: Eastside Arts Alliance in East Oakland begins offering community programs, affordable housing and office space to support a creative environment that improves the quality of life and advocates for progressive, systemic



social change as an educational, celebratory and community gathering space. Each year, Eastside also hosts the free outdoor Malcolm X Jazz Arts Festival.

2001: As the day after Thanksgiving (aka Black Friday) becomes the busiest shopping day of the year, activists protest at the new Bay Street mall in Emeryville, because it was built on top of a historic Ohlone Shellmound, one of the last native burial grounds in the Bay Area.

2003: Due to a 30-year campaign of activism and civil disobedience by the Puerto Rican people, the Navy stops doing bombing practice on Vieques Island and leaves the island once and for all.

2003: In the leadup to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, ordered by George W. Bush, millions of Americans and people around the world protest and demonstrate for peace. The day the works break out, March 20, 2003, over 25,000 people from across the Bay Area protest and shut down the Financial District in downtown San Francisco. They protest the oil companies and other corporations that will profit from the war: Chevron, Bechtel, and others. Over 2,000 people are arrested.

2006: The Great American Strike (La Gran Marcha) happens on May Day (May 1st), in which Latinos, immigrants, and activists boycotted U.S. schools and businesses, to protest a harsh new anti-immigrant law proposed in Congress. Months later, the law fails to pass.

2009: On New Year's Eve, a BART policeman named Johannes Mehserle shoots and kills an unarmed black man, Oscar Grant. The shooting is filmed and put on Youtube, viewed by millions of people in one of the most blatant cases of police violence in U.S. history. After thousands of people take to the streets in protests and mini-riots, Mehserle is arrested and eventually convicted of manslaughter (but not murder). This is the first time a cop has been sent to jail for killing a civilian, but Mehserle gets out after serving only 1 year.

2011: The state of Arizona passes SB 1070, a

harsh new law that increases the criminalization, police surveillance, and deportation of "suspected" undocumented immigrants. Protests are held around the country, and the Supreme Court rules that many of the law's provisions are unconstitutional.

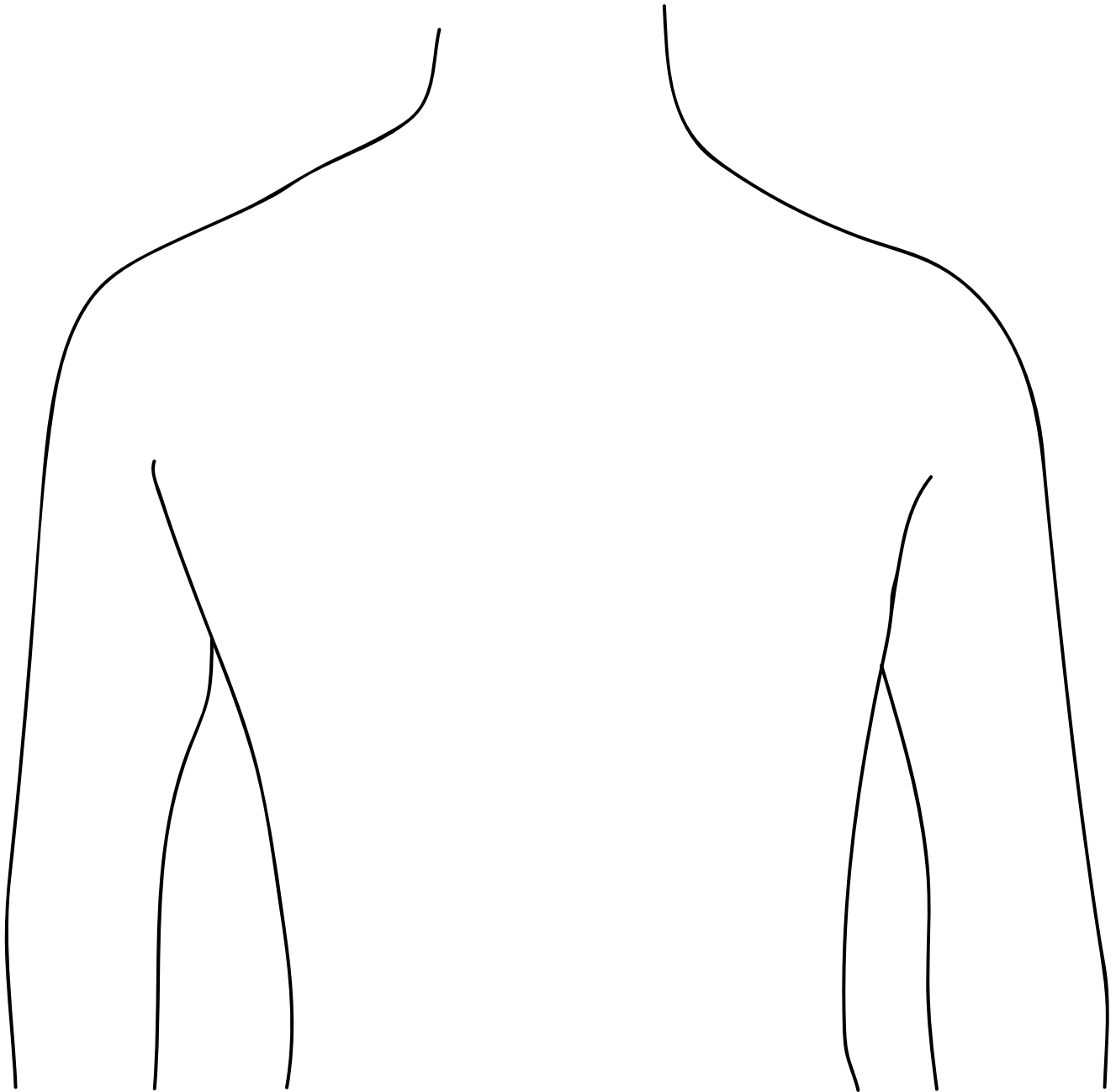
2011: Occupy Wall Street starts in New York City, soon spreading across the U.S. and then the world. Setting up their tents in front of banks and city halls across the country, the activists remind the country that it was the big banks that caused the recession, chanting "They got bailed out! We got sold out!" The largest Occupy group outside of New York is Occupy Oakland, which has a General Strike of over 50,000 people on November 2, shutting down the Port of Oakland and protesting home foreclosures, school closures, and police brutality.

2012: UNIDOS, a group of high school student activists in Tuscon, Arizona, begin meeting on weekends to hold Chicano Studies classes after the state bans Mexican-American studies. Despite two years of protests, the Tuscon Unified School Board votes to ban the Mexican American Studies program in a district that is a majority Latino. So the students decide to create their own program for themselves.

2012: A grassroots coalition of students, teachers, immigrants, unions, and liberal politicians like Gov. Jerry Brown pass Prop 30 in California. Prop 30 raises taxes on big corporations and the wealthy for the first time in decades, raising billions of dollars for public schools and other social services, giving people hope that this will start to end some of the massive inequality in our schools.

Infinity of Traces Tattoo

NAME



HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS

THE KNOTTED LINE

Critical Resistance PIC Concentric Circles



This worksheet is created by Critical Resistance

Social Problem Violence in schools

NAME

DOMINANT NARRATIVE

What People Who Are
for the PIC are Saying

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

What are the deeper
roots, who should be
involved but aren't?.

CAUSED BY

Unruly kids

SOLUTION DECIDED BY

Politicians, school board

INFORMED BY..

(what viewpoint or
prejudice is inform-
ing the decision
makers?)

Racism, classism

SOLUTION

Zero tolerance polices,
metal detectors in schools,
police in schools

IMPACT

Increase in suspension and
expulsion, which increases
chances of incarceration
later in life



Economic Problem

Unprofitable farmland and lack of jobs in California

NAME

DOMINANT NARRATIVE

What People Who Are for the PIC are Saying

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

What are the deeper roots, who should be involved but aren't?

CAUSED BY

Overseas competition, immigrant competition, increased output of agriculture...

SOLUTION DECIDED BY

Developer, landowners, politicians,

INFORMED BY..

(what viewpoint or prejudice is informing the decision makers?)

Capitalism, racism

SOLUTION

Sell lands to developers, build prisons, employ local residents

IMPACT

Loss of agricultural land, low wage and unskilled employment, more people in prison

Political Problem

Shifting demographics of voting population

NAME

DOMINANT NARRATIVE

What People Who Are for the PIC are Saying

FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

What are the deeper roots, who should be involved but aren't?

CAUSED BY

Immigration, "Teenage moms"

SOLUTION DECIDED BY

Politicians, voters, supreme court...

INFORMED BY..

(what viewpoint or prejudice is informing the decision makers?)

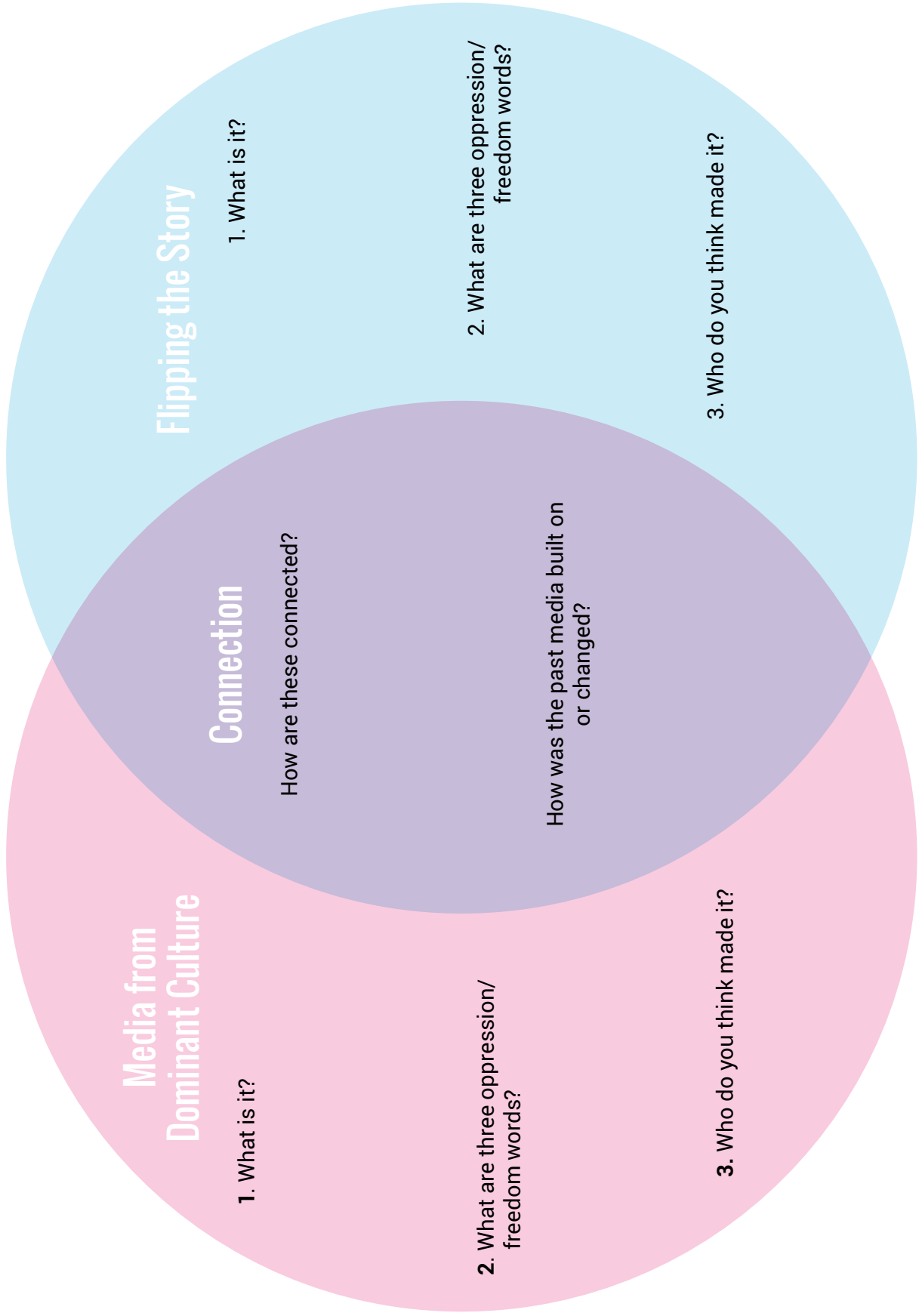
Sexism, racism, classism...

SOLUTION

Voter ID laws, immigrant ID laws, criminalization of immigrants and young adults...

IMPACT

Deportations, loss of voter involvement, disenfranchisement...



Character Sketch

NAME

Character Name

Historical Moment and time-period:

Key POWER words that relate to this moment and why these relate:

Detailed physical description

Gender:

Age:

Hair color/style:

Eye color:

Height:

Race/Ethnicity:

Vocal characteristics (accent, quiet, nasal, etc):

Distinguishing features (glasses, birthmark, one eye, etc):

Key Character Traits:

Motivation

What is the goal of this Character?

What is the Character's plan to achieve the goal?



What is preventing them from reaching this goal?

What resources, skills or support will help them achieve this goal?

Character Background

Education:

Personality:

Likes:

Dislikes:

Family Background:

Habits/Vices:

Other details:

Concentric Circles Worksheet

NAME _____

