

Pre-Activity Projects for The Ville & The Hill

1. Read and Discuss:

- I Have A Dream Speech – Martin Luther King
- Dreams Deferred – Langston Hughes
- Study the Preamble to the Constitution
- Bill Of Rights
- Speech on Civil Rights Bill – President Johnson
- On the Pulse of Morning – Toni Morrison

2. Watch these movies:

- Selma
- To Kill A Mocking Bird
- Guess Who I Coming to Dinner
- The Blind Side
- Do the Right Thing

3. Discuss these quotes:

Malcolm X: “We didn't land on Plymouth Rock. Plymouth Rock landed on us.”

The Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”

Abraham Joshua Heschel: “Racism is man's gravest threat to man - the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.”

4. Take a trip:

- Missouri History Museum
- Ferguson
- The Ville
- The Hill

5. Reference Books:

Black Like Me - John Howard Griffin

In the Deep South of the 1950s, journalist John Howard Griffin decided to cross the color line. Using medication that darkened his skin to deep brown, he exchanged his privileged life as a Southern white man for the disenfranchised world of an unemployed black man. His audacious, still chillingly relevant eyewitness history is a work about race and humanity-that in this new millennium still has something important to say to every American.

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

A must-read title if you've ever looked at the disproportionate rates of arrest by race in the United States and wondered, “What's up with that?” Alexander's prose is elegant as she explores the way sentencing and incarceration is used not only as punishment, but as a sophisticated means of social control.

***Some of My Best Friends Are Black* by Tanner Colby**

Explores the myth of a post-racial America and particularly challenges the notion that integration of communities and neighbourhoods, as a process, is in any way finished. Colby uses four case studies, interweaving them with larger social trends, to examine how racial divides really work on the ground in America today. Simultaneously showing the history, the progress, and the distance yet to travel regarding urban planning, this balanced portrait of American sentiments about race is worth your time.

***Whistling Vivaldi and Other Clues to How Stereotypes Affect Us* by Claude M. Steele**

A book for anyone who has ever wondered, even in passing, even in the quietest part of your brain, “Why doesn’t such-and-such a group just work harder?” Steele gives examples and evidence from across socioeconomic, racial, and gender groups to show how the expectations we hold for each other — positive, negative, and seemingly neutral — have a real-world impact on our ability to succeed.

***White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son* by Tim Wise**

A memoir about advantage and opportunity. If the phrase “check your privilege” gets your back up, it’s probably because you don’t really understand what privilege is and what you’re being asked to do in that context. Wise thoughtfully unpacks his own privilege and interrogates his own position in American society. A good primer on the concept and critical reading for anyone who wants to be an effective ally in the fight for social justice.

***The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* by Thomas King**

Points out the value in understanding history, and the history of racial tension certainly needs to take a spin through colonialism and colonization. King’s exploration of this history is tinged with black humor and his signature absurdest style, but it’s also biting, thorough, and unflinching. This is an incredibly effective reminder of the importance of our collective past in shaping our futures.

***The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley* by Malcolm X**

Malcolm’s fascinating perspective on the lies and limitations of the American Dream, and the inherent racism in a society that denies its nonwhite citizens the opportunity to dream, gives extraordinary insight into the most urgent issues of our own time.

6. Vocabulary Words

- Prejudice
- Stereotype
- Red lining
- Desegregation
- Ghetto
- Blight
- Implode
- Integration
- Equality
- Freedom
- Justice
- Hope
- Communication
- Inclusion
- Cultural Sensitivity