

The following quotes and instructions were assembled, and generously shared with the Pulitzer Center team, by Lori Beza from Schenectady High School (Albany, NY)

Quotes:

My dad always flew an American flag in our front yard. The blue paint on our two-story house was perennially chipping; the fence, or the rail by the stairs, or the front door, existed in a perpetual state of disrepair, but that flag always flew pristine.

So in the 1940s, she packed up her few belongings and her three small children and joined the flood of black southerners fleeing north. She got off the Illinois Central railroad in Waterloo, Iowa, only to have her hopes of the mythical promised land shattered when she learned that Jim Crow did not end at the Mason-Dixon line.

So When I was young, that flag outside our home never made sense to me. How could this black man, having seen first hand the way his country abused black Americans, how it refused to treat us as full citizens, proudly fly its banner?

Like most young people, I thought I understood so much, when in fact, I understood so little.

It seemed that the closest thing black Americans could have to cultural pride was to be found in our vague connection to Africa, a place we had never been.

So my father, one of those many black Americans who answered the call, knew what it would take me years to understand; that the year 1619 is as important to the American story as 1776.

That my dad felt so much honor in being an American felt like a marker of his degradation, his acceptance of our subordination.

My grandmama, as we called her, found a house in a segregated black neighborhood on the city's east side and then found the work that was considered black women's work no matter where black women lived - cleaning white people's houses.

I didn't understand his patriotism. It deeply embarrassed me.

My father knew exactly what he was doing when he raised that flag.

Like all the black men and women in my family, he believed in hard work, but like all the black men and women in my family, no matter how hard he worked, he never got ahead.

They laid the foundations of the White House and the Capitol, even placing with their unfree hands on the stature of freedom atop the Capitol dome.

Quote Mingle Procedure

Mingle procedure:

- Read your quote from the article
- What do you think the article is about?
- What is a question you have about the article?
- Mingle
 - Read your quote to another
 - Give the meaning of your quote in your own words
 - Tell your partner what you think the article is about
 - Tell your partner the question you have
 - Change roles
- Switch partners, repeat 2 more x
- Whole group
 - make a bulleted list of ideas about what the article is about
 - make a bulleted list of questions about the article