

## Reckoning with the Enlightenment through Student Community Journalism

Unit by Catherine Irving

<b>Lesson 1</b>
<b>Lesson Objectives and Essential Questions</b>
<p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify themes central to the European Enlightenment</li> <li>● Evaluate quotations from Enlightenment-era writing</li> <li>● Compare and contrast primary sources advocating for liberty and discriminating against marginalized communities</li> </ul> <p><b>Essential Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What do you already know about the Enlightenment?</li> <li>● What more can we learn about its impact that we might not have considered before</li> </ul>
<b>Warm-up</b>
<p>Working in groups, let's brainstorm what we already know about the Enlightenment and what more we can learn about its impact that we might not have considered before.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In small groups discuss your responses to the following questions:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What do you know about the Enlightenment?</li> <li>b. What kind of impact did it have from what we have already studied?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. After discussing with your group, send a recorder up to the board to write your answer for the class to see.</li> <li>3. As a class, discuss your responses to the following questions:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What does freedom mean to you?</li> <li>b. How does freedom affect your life?</li> <li>c. What does equality mean to you?</li> <li>d. What examples of equality do you see in your life and / or in the news?</li> <li>e. Can you think of any examples when people don't feel fully free or equal?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson</b>
<p><a href="#">Enlightenment Quote Analysis Activity Worksheet</a>  <a href="#">Immigrant Views of US Racism</a></p>

[Coming to America, It's Not Like the Movie](#)**Lesson / Activities****Enlightenment Quote Analysis**

Break up into partners. Use the [Enlightenment Quote Analysis Activity worksheet](#) to evaluate quotes from Enlightenment-era thinkers.

1. Read through the first set of quotes with your partner and evaluate how this quote captures an idea that impacts society.
  - a. Review the student-generated responses to the Enlightenment questions from the warm up on the board:
    - i. What do you need to add to what you understand about the impact of the ideas?
  - b. Discuss your impressions of The Enlightenment with your class:
    - i. How have your ideas about the impact of the Enlightenment changed after reading the first set of quotes?
2. Return to the Enlightenment Quote Analysis worksheet and evaluate the second set of quotes with your partner.
  - a. Revisit the ideas about the Enlightenment on the board.
    - i. What do you need to add to what you understand about the impact of the ideas?
  - b. Discuss your impressions of The Enlightenment with your class.
    - i. How have your ideas about the impact of the Enlightenment changed after reading the first set of quotes?
3. Continue on with the analysis questions at the bottom of the Enlightenment Quote Analysis worksheet.
  - a. Record your response to question 3 on the board:
    - i. Do any of these views sound like views you see in our world today? Include the specific example you listed.
  - b. When all groups complete the worksheet, share your response to the final question with the class:
    - i. Can you see how the Enlightenment actually defined a system of justified discrimination whose legacy lasts into societies today?

**Closing**

Let's look at the topics you found to connect to our overall theme of the legacy of the

Enlightenment institutionalizing discrimination.

1. What were some of the freedoms proposed in the selection of quotes?
2. Who had a *right* to these freedoms? Who didn't?

**Homework**

Read "[Coming to America: It's Not Like the Movie](#)" and answer the following questions in the [Immigrant Views of US Racism](#) worksheet:

1. How do some immigrants perceive race relations in the United States before they arrive?
2. Which legacy from today's lesson do they see America's principles based upon?
3. Which legacy from today's lesson is still evident in our systems which shocks some immigrants?
4. How can you personally relate to the perceptions in this article? Which America do you see?

**Lesson 2**

**Lesson Objectives and Essential Question**

**Objectives:**

- Describe the impact of Imperialism on global communities
- Analyze the theme of racism in *White Man's Burden* by Rudyard Kipling
- Define systemic racism
- Identify the roots of systemic racism and examples of systemic racism in Chicago

**Essential Question:**

How did European colonial policy use both sides of the Enlightenment to justify the perception of who was worthy and capable of justice or freedom?

**Warm-up**

We have looked at Imperialism through the perspectives of the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and East Asia. We know what it looks like from their perspectives. Now let's spend more time on what the Europeans thought.

1. Take a blank piece of printing paper or notebook paper and fold in it 4.
2. In three of the squares pick from the regions we have already studied and either draw a picture or fill the space with words (the words can be organized in a message/poem/lyric

or just collaged with terms that represent the history) that symbolize how the region experienced or was impacted by European colonization. For example, one square could represent any area within South America, the next anywhere in Africa, and the next China.

3. Leave the fourth square blank.
4. Describe what you drew or wrote about each country with the class.
5. Reflect on everyone's contributions. What story is told through our depictions?

### Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson

[White Man's Burden Activity Worksheet](#)

[What is Systemic Racism?](#) (4 ½ minute video)

[Perspectives of Europeans on non-Europeans Activity Worksheet](#)

### Lesson / Activities

#### **White Man's Burden**

Let's learn about the European perspective by reviewing *White Man's Burden*.

1. Complete the [White Man's Burden activity](#) in pairs.
  - a. Read through the poem
  - b. Answer the questions at the bottom of the worksheet.
2. Share your response to the following question with the class:
  - a. What does Kipling mean by the white man's burden?
  - b. How does Kipling justify imperialism in the poem?
  - c. Why is this justification so appealing to Europeans?

#### **Imperialism and Enlightenment in Context**

1. Return to the folded paper from our warm up activity. In the fourth square, capture the European perspective of imperialism in visuals or with words.
2. Examine all four perspectives captured on the folded paper. Discuss the following with a partner:
  - a. Is it misleading that there are 3 similar perspectives? Does that make it look like their messages are more powerful since there are more of them?
  - b. Which perspective has the most power and which system prevails?
  - c. How do your findings fit our theme that freedoms were designed for certain groups?
  - d. How do we see the dual ideas of the Enlightenment coming through?

*Educator note: once students are done discussing the four perspectives, post the papers around the room. This will remind students of the systems established and the perspectives of those systems.*

**Systemic Racism**

We are starting to understand how the legacy of Imperialism and the Enlightenment affected society differently, depending on the community. A Eurocentric view of the world has become an ingrained determinant of the systems that operate society today.

1. We are going to watch a short video about systemic racism. Before watching the video respond to the following questions:
  - a. Why do we need to understand where inequalities come from?
  - b. How does knowing history help change the system?
  - c. Can you think of any examples of historical inequalities in our city?
  - d. How can productive alliances be made between the traditional power structures and the traditionally discriminated?

*Educator note: this could be on a jamboard, nearpod, classroom board*

2. Watch [What is Systemic Racism?](#)
3. Respond to the following discussion questions:
  - a. Do you see any connections from your 4 squares representing the different views from the history of imperialism to what was explained in the video?
  - b. Do you see any connections between the article you read for homework ([Immigrant Views of US Racism](#)) about coming to America?

**Perspectives of Europeans on Non-Europeans Activity**

We will look at a few more examples of European views of people from this period of imperialism and see if we can trace their legacies to Enlightenment theory.

1. Complete the [Perspectives of Europeans on Non-Europeans](#) activity worksheet independently or in partners.

**Homework**

Complete the Perspectives of Europeans on Non-Europeans Activity Worksheet.

**Lesson 3**

### Lesson Objectives and Essential Questions

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to...

- Practice writing and asking interview questions
- Connect ideas foundational to colonialism to contemporary examples of racial discrimination

**Essential Question:**

How do we see the legacy of Enlightenment ideas in current international news in areas where Europe had colonized?

### Warm-up

**Interview your neighbor**

Use the [Interview Your Neighbor worksheet](#) to come up with 4 questions for a classmate. The goal of your interview is to discover what your classmate understands about this unit so far and whether the unit is connecting to their lives in some way.

1. Use the following outline to guide your question construction:
  - a. Question 1 should warm up the relationship.
  - b. Question 2 and 3 should be open-ended questions that evaluate what your classmate is learning so far.
  - c. Question 4 should be an open-ended question encouraging the person to explain any personal connections they have to the unit.
2. When you are done, ask the person if they are willing to have you share their answers publicly with the class.
3. We will do two rounds of interviews:
  - a. We will have the class pair up and one of you will ask the questions.
  - b. We will switch up the pairs but ensure that everyone who was the interviewer, now becomes the interviewee.
4. Finally, we share and discuss the answers to the degree that the interviewee wanted their information shared.

### Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson

[Review interview activity](#)

[Perspectives of Europeans on non-Europeans activity](#)

[Ted Talk "Let's Get to the Root of Racial Injustice"](#)

[Enlightenment Connections to Global Current Events activity](#)

### Lesson / Activities

Today we will discuss the European ideas and how they impacted societies at the time and if we see this today. We'll be building on the ideas from the Perspectives of Europeans of Non-Europeans Activity worksheet.

#### **The Root of Racial Injustice**

1. Watch the Ted Talk "[Let's Get to the Root of Racial Injustice](#)" about current events in America.
2. As you are watching, see if you can connect the ideas that Megan Francis discusses to any of the perspectives developed by the Europeans during the colonial period of the 1800's into the 1900's you just studied.

#### **Making Connections to Current Global News**

How do you see the legacy of colonization affecting the world today?

1. Use the [Enlightenment Connections to Global Current Events](#) worksheet to trace how the legacy of the Enlightenment and colonialism impacts current global issues.
2. Form groups of 4 to discuss your individual findings. Answer the following questions:
  - a. How did the application of Enlightenment ideals depend on the group?
  - b. How did the European Enlightenment create a legacy of justice for the few and systemic discrimination for the many?

### Homework

Complete the Enlightenment Connections to Global Current Events worksheet in preparation for our next class.

## Lesson 4

### Lesson Objectives and Essential Questions

#### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to...

- Define the term "disruptor"
- Identify disruptors in Chicago
- Brainstorm methods for contacting disruptors in your community

<p><b>Essential Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who has disrupted the traditional narrative set up centuries ago during the Enlightenment?</li> <li>• How did they do it and what are their stories?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Warm-up</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In groups of four, use the <a href="#">What is a Disruptor?</a> worksheet to brainstorm as many words, examples, and experiences you can come up with that fit your ideas of what a disruptor is. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the class.</li> <li>2. Each group will present a few examples from their paper and we will discuss our understanding of a disruptor as a class.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson</b></p>
<p><a href="#">What is a Disruptor?</a></p> <p><a href="#">Disruptors to the Historical Narrative</a></p> <p><a href="#">Issue Exploration Document</a></p>
<p><b>Lesson / Activities</b></p>
<p><b>Disruptors to the Historical Narrative</b></p> <p>Today, we'll become investigators looking for stories of a person or group who has worked to change the historical narrative.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the <a href="#">Disruptors to the Historical Narrative Activity</a> Worksheet to do the following:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review the quote, policy, and current event you selected to explore in the <a href="#">Enlightenment Connections to Global Current Events</a> and describe what it would take to change this situation? Write your idea down at the top of the worksheet.</li> <li>b. Find a story of a person or group who has worked to disrupt discriminatory traditions and record your findings in the worksheet.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. After finding your story and answering the questions, join a small group and share your response to the following questions:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What are the qualities of a disruptor? Think of what it takes to be the person or group who changes the historic system.</li> <li>b. Can you think of any disruptors in Chicago? List your ideas and explain what historical system they were trying to change.</li> <li>c. List strategies you could use to find disruptors in your community or in the larger community of Chicago.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Homework</b></p>



Think about any connections you can make from our study of Enlightenment quotes, colonial policy, global current events and disruptors to your own community or lives.

1. For homework, use the [Issue Exploration Document](#) activity to brainstorm your ideas before next class.
2. Do some research, look around your neighborhood, talk to your family and friends about experiences they may have had. How do we see the legacy of discrimination in our own communities today? And how do we see those legacies being broken down?

## Lesson 5

### Lesson Objectives and Essential Questions

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to...

- Summarize the performance task
- Describe the process of identifying disruptors in the community, interviewing change leaders, and presenting their story

**Essential Question:**

- How have counternarratives in our own communities shown that the ideals of the Enlightenment have become increasingly accessible to a broader range of groups?
- How have people around us disrupted the traditional narrative?

### Warm-up

**Discuss Discrimination, Past and Present**

Open the [Issue Exploration Document](#) activity where you thought about connections between our Enlightenment quotes, colonial history, and global current events to your own community and lives. Turn to a neighbor and share out your ideas.

1. Listen to your partner. Ask any clarifying questions. Give feedback on ideas of ways the student could pursue their ideas further within our own communities.
2. Switch roles and follow the same process. Listen to your partner. Ask any clarifying questions. Give feedback on ideas of ways the student could pursue their ideas further within our own communities.

We have seen how the Enlightenment ideas inspired revolutionary movements around the world and introduced concepts of freedom and liberty. We have also seen how these ideals were kept from different groups and discrimination was justified by century's old Enlightenment ideas. Many Europeans saw the justice and liberty aspects as meant for themselves while others

were deemed not worthy even within the European community.

### **Connect Issues in Your Community to Quotes from the Enlightenment**

The Enlightenment introduced ideas of liberty and equality, but only for the privileged of the time. We have examined evidence of the systemic discrimination created as early as the late 1600's and traced those ideals up to modern day. We will analyze how contemporary counter narratives made Enlightenment ideals accessible to a broader range of people. I want us to find the people, groups, movements (anything) that are changing the accepted narrative or acting as the disruptors. They may very well be within your own family.

1. Take the community ideas you have just shared and connect them back to our [Enlightenment Quote Analysis Activity](#) that looked at quotes from the Enlightenment.
2. Find a discriminatory quote that fits any issue you looked at through your brainstorming document. We are going to move into making this a more formal investigation.
  - a. What can you find in our communities that show there is change afoot? These examples are called the counter-narrative which is the story that goes against the status quo. Your task will be to report on those who have broken the system, which we call disruptors.

#### **Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson**

[Issue Exploration Document activity](#)

[Enlightenment Quote Analysis Activity](#)

[Investigating the Counter-Narrative](#) and [Grading Guide](#)

#### **Lesson / Activities**

### **Introduction to Performance Task - Investigating Counter-Narratives**

It's time to bring all of this together through your own investigations in your communities.

The goal of this project is to show that the original Enlightenment promises of liberty coupled with the historically accepted views of discrimination are meeting in our current communities and lives. Those who have always controlled the narrative are still influential, however, more and more groups are starting to change that narrative. The historic ideals of the Enlightenment are being used against itself to bring about more liberty and justice for all.

Groups who have histories of privilege are allying with historically disenfranchised groups to bring about change in the narrative. How can you show that? How have counter narratives developed in our communities that show that over time the historic benefits of the Enlightenment for a few have become increasingly accessible to more groups in our current communities?

You will investigate the counter-narrative/disruptors to the traditional situations. You will...

1. Find stories where the traditional narrative can be seen. Students can find this story in an already reported story (newspaper, podcast, nonfiction / informational text, etc)
2. Find a counter narrative to show how those who were originally marginalized are now finding freedom, opportunity, equality, representation, etc. The counter narrative is the heart of the project and will require their reporting.
3. Your planning will be documented in this document [Investigating the Counter-Narrative](#) as you move forward in your project.
4. Craft and present a counter narrative to the class in any of the following ways:
  - a. Photojournalism project
  - b. Interview
  - c. Poems
  - d. Graphic novel
  - e. Documentary film
  - f. Written articles
  - g. Chapter book/short stories
  - h. Newspaper front page
  - i. podcast

### Review Grading Rubric

Your projects have some requirements from me. Let's work together as a class to create a rubric with point values so that we agree on what I require and what you see as important to value in your work. There is going to be so much variety in what you create, so I want you to analyze how you will know you told a great story.

1. Review the [Grading Guide](#).
  - a. On the first page, you'll see my requirements.
  - b. On the second page you'll see a blank student rubric. Jot down some initial ideas for requirements you have for yourself to ensure that your project flourishes. This may change as you start this process, so be open to the changes.

### Homework

Work in the calendar at the bottom of the [Investigating the Counter-Narrative](#) document to map out when you will accomplish the different parts of your project.

<b>Lesson 6</b>
<b>Lesson Objectives</b>
<b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to work on their counter-narrative projects
<b>Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson</b>
<a href="#">Investigating the Counter-Narrative</a>
<b>Lesson / Activities</b>
<p>This is a work day for students.</p> <p><i>Educator's note: You may want to vary how your students work on this project. Further lessons of content could be taught as students work outside of class. Ensure that you schedule check-ins with students. Teachers could also work on this project every day in class until the project is completed. Inviting a journalist to your classroom to share tips on investigating stories and interviewing people would be an enriching supplement. We hosted <a href="#">Arionne Nettles</a>, a Pulitzer grantee.</i></p>