Images from the Past, Images from the Present

Black Excellence, Resistance, and Joy
Yesterday and Today

Tenth Grade African American History, Rotation One
Harriet Jacobs
- Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

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Harriet Jacobs – Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

This collage is centered around Harriet Jacobs, a freedom seeker who also wrote the famous narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. The selected images represent Jacobs’ achievements, and one of them even demonstrates one of the hardships she had to endure while attempting to gain her freedom. Two of them are of Jacobs herself. The painting to the left depicts African Americans learning to read around the time Jacobs wrote her book. Reading and education are two central themes in her book. The final image is of her plaque, which demonstrates the importance of her achievements and their relevance today.

Harriet Jacobs was a major representation of Black excellence. The hardships she had to endure during her quest for freedom, and the perseverance that she showed throughout, represents what enslaved African Americans were willing to do to escape slavery. This also shows Black resistance towards slavery. Her work also represents Black excellence, as her narrative was one of the first to be from the perspective of an enslaved woman, and the accuracy with which it was written makes an important piece of historical literature.
Quinta Brunson

This is a collage of Quinta Brunson. Brunson uses the internet and memes to portray issues that are happening in Philadelphia today. She worked at Buzzfeed, but left and went on to partake in bigger projects, which are featured in the collage. She wrote *She Memes Well* and starred in many shows, such as the HBO comedy series, *A Black Lady Sketch Show*, and her own show, *Abbott Elementary*, a satirical show about an elementary school in Philadelphia. She started *Abbott Elementary* based on her experiences as a public school student in Philadelphia, and based on her mother’s experiences in Philadelphia public schools. It highlights struggles of the Philadelphia School District and education system, and the difficulties teachers have to go through. Brunson’s work is a perfect representation of Black excellence and resistance through all of her accomplishments, and because she succeeded through all of the hardships of being a Black woman in the entertainment industry.
NOW IN CAMP AT READVILLE!

54th REGIMENT!

African Descent

Col. Robert G. Shaw

Colored Men, Rally 'Round the Flag of Service.

Mass. Volunteers, composed of men of

Clothing and equipment to families.

$10.00 per man.

After the attack on Fort Wagner July 18, 1863.
The 54th Massachusetts Regiment was an all-Black regiment that participated in the Civil War. This regiment was one of many all-Black regiments that fought for the Union, sparking controversy due to their involvement in the war. The 54th Massachusetts Regiment fought in several locations, most famously assisting in the defense of Fort Wagner.

The mere existence of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, let alone their contribution to the Union’s war effort, is an expression of Black excellence and resistance. The regiment participated in many battles, displaying their training, discipline, and prowess. They resisted the oppression and vices of the Confederacy and the institution of slavery. This regiment, like many all-Black regiments at the time, fought bravely and valiantly despite how underreported their contribution was.
Andy, Candelaria, Kenneth, and Laila
This is a collage of Judith Jamison, a Philadelphian dancer best known for her work at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The company was founded by Alvin Ailey “to carry out his vision of a company dedicated to enriching the American modern dance heritage and preserving the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience.” After years of dancing with the company, Jamison became the Artistic Director and choreographed/directed many celebrated works.

We included photographs of Jamison together with Ailey, who named her as his successor. The photos showing multiple dancers with outstretched arms are from the dance “Revelations”. It is one of the company’s most well known works, depicting the history, faith, and culture of African Americans. The collage portrays her life both as a dancer and as a leader of the company from past to present.

Jamison and her esteemed work at Alvin Ailey are prime examples of Black excellence in the arts. Through dance, she portrays not only Black joy and resistance, but a range of emotions and experiences.
Maritime Slave Revolts
The Maritime Slave Revolts

The collage is about the maritime slave revolts, revolts onboard slave ships where captured Africans attempted to take their freedom before arriving in the Americas. Some of the more well-known of these are the *Amistad* revolt and the revolt aboard the *Creole*, which were both successful. However, hundreds more were attempted to varying degrees of success.

The images we use are all drawings that depicted different maritime slave revolts. When arranging these primary sources, we ensured that each drawing depicted a different scene.

This not only made the collage visually appealing, but supplied it with additional information.

Black resistance is clearly represented by these events. Enslaved Africans did everything they could to regain their freedom, even risking their own lives. Despite the high rate of death on slave voyages and how few revolts succeeded, they kept happening. People kept seeking freedom, no matter the cost.
Lynne Carter

This college is in celebration of Lynne Carter’s induction into the Atlantic City Boxing Hall of Fame. On October 6 2022, Lynne Carter will be the first ever African American woman to be inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame. Carter has judged boxing matches on six continents and has acquired a multitude of awards/recognitions. During her time as a judge in Atlantic City, Carter founded “A Fight For A Cause,” which is an after-school program based in South Philadelphia that focuses on providing aid towards austic children. In aiding her fight to help austic children, she has raised large amounts of money for families with children of special needs. We chose images of Carter in celebratory situations, to show her joy for the sport. We included boxing-related imagery because this is a story about boxing, and boxing is what Carter is known for.

Carter is an excellent boxing judge and is celebrated for her style of judging. She exhibits joy in the sport and in her job as a judge. She also demonstrated resistance against being excluded from her profession because of her gender and race.
A NARRATIVE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BLACK PEOPLE,
DURING THE LATE
Awful Calamity in Philadelphia,
IN THE YEAR 1793:
AND
A REFUTATION
OF SOME
CENSURES,
Thrown upon them in some late Publications.

BY A. J. AND R. A.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED FOR THE AUTHORS.
WILLIAM W. WOODWARD, AT FRANKLIN'S HEAD,
NO. 41, CHESTNUT-STREET.
1794.
Richard Allen was a formerly enslaved black man living in Philadelphia. He was very religious, and formed the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first AME Church in America. There are images of the Mother Bethel AME Church from different time periods: one from the late 1700s and one taken recently. We also put an image of Richard Allen himself, as well as a sign in Philadelphia informing people about his life and accomplishments. Richard Allen showed Black excellence and resistance by opening the first AME Church in America, and keeping it open even when pressured not to by a racist society.
Debra Williams

Debra Williams is a Black entrepreneur in Philadelphia. She found herself struggling to find a place where she felt safe to exercise where there were people that looked like her. She decided to open Smart Fitness Studio. The images depict Debra Williams and the inside of Smart Fitness Studio. Debra’s story demonstrates Black excellence, as she has been able to grow a business she owns. She also shows resistance overcoming financial problems, as many banks were not willing to give her a loan. In order to find enough money, she had to get a second mortgage on her home. Williams was eventually able to push through, and bought all of the equipment needed to jump start her studio. Through everything Williams was still able to achieve her goal of encouraging adults to live a healthier lifestyle, while also promoting body positivity.
The Underground Railroad in Ripley, Ohio

John Rankin’s house in Ripley, Ohio was a critical stop in aiding freedom seekers towards freedom. The Rankins hid freedom seekers from slave-catchers regularly and it was a significant stop for many escaped African Americans.

One of the abolitionists who took them here was John Parker, a self made abolitionist and formerly enslaved African American who had been fortunate to receive an education while enslaved. He freed himself with money he had earned by working at a foundry, and later opened his own foundry which proved to be a successful business for him. He regularly took enslaved Africans from Kentucky to John Rankin’s house.

We chose these images because these are people and landmarks that greatly contributed to the freeing of enslaved African Americans. Some images are modern - such as the landmark description of the John P. Parker house, but most of the images are from that time period.

This event shows Black resistance because this allowed freedom seekers to find a refuge across the Ohio river. This shows Black excellence due to John P. Parker’s impact on helping freedom seekers. He had ensured his freedom by buying it at the age of 18 after years of being a foundry worker. After moving to Ohio, He would risk his life in order to help freedom seekers escape from Kentucky.
Raheem “King” Saladeen

King Saladeen is a successful Black artist whose unique work is known worldwide. He’s had collaborations with many well-known brands such as Nike, Mercedes, Topps, and even the NFL. From the profits of his artwork, he has donated more than $500,000 to cancer research.

The images shown in the collage are a mixture of King Saladeen’s artworks. From canvas to mannequins, King Saladeen uses a variety of medias and subjects to create a visually interesting experience every time. His artwork has similar drawings, such as the money bear (his signature design), but none of his final pieces are the same. The money bear is shown in the front of the entire collage, to represent the similarities between all of his pieces. If you look closely you can see he has added words and drawings relating to cancer, which is the charity he focused on raising money for the most.

His unique and colorful artwork are a display of his rich imagination, and Saladeen was able to turn his passion into a business. This shows his excellence as he was able to create success from the beautiful imagery he shows in his artwork.
Aujourd'hui, premier janvier, il bâtit cet ouvrage, le Général en Chef de l'Armée Indigène, accompagné des Généraux, chefs de l'armée, convoqués à l'effet de prendre les mesures qui doivent tendre au bonheur du pays.

Après avoir fait connaître aux Généraux assemblés, les véritables intentions, d'assurer à jamais aux Indigènes d'Haiti, un Gouvernement stable, objet de la plus vive sollicitude; ce qu'il a fait pour qui tend à faire connaître aux Français, la résolution de rendre le pays, et de jouir d'une liberté comparable au peuple de cette île; et que ces actes recevus, a demandé qu'on leur fasse de même, assemblées prononçant le serment de veiller à jamais à la France, de mourir plutôt que de vivre sous sa domination, et de combattre jusqu'au dernier soupir pour l'indépendance.
The Haitian Revolution was a successful slave revolt that resulted in the creation of the first free Black Republic in the Western hemisphere. Enslaved Haitians were subject to poor conditions and often suffered from diseases, malnutrition, and injury. The French forces were sent to stop rebellion but most died of yellow fever, and the entire island was declared independent on January 1st 1804.

The Haitian Revolution is an example of Black excellence and resistance because enslaved people united to resist the cruelty of the French, and not only did they have the courage to fight back against heavily armed French men, but they succeeded in their attempt.

On the left side of our collage we put the Haitian Declaration of Independence which outlaws slavery and forms the Nation. The figure in the center is a painting of Toussaint L'ouverture, the Haitian general who led the revolution. The image in the top right is a map of independent Haiti. The other images are depictions of scenes in the revolution, ranging from military battles against the French, to common people and slaves revolting against the French. In the end, the Haitian Revolution was one of the most monumental events in both world history and black history.
The Black Doctors Consortium was started by Dr. Ala Stanford, a pediatric and general surgeon, in response to Black Philadelphians being disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their efforts have largely consisted of testing and vaccination efforts in Black communities. So far, the consortium has vaccinated 53,000 Philadelphians. 54% of Black Philadelphians are now vaccinated; one of the highest Black vaccination rates in the country. In addition to battling the COVID-19 pandemic the Consortium recently opened a primary care facility in North Philadelphia, the Dr. Ala Stanford Center for Health Equity, that focuses on preventative medicine.

The Black Doctors Consortium reflects Black excellence by bringing about real, positive change in the Black community and Philadelphia as a whole. Health equity is a long fought battle with few victories, but the actions of the Consortium are a major victory and this would not have been possible without the excellence and resilience of the Consortium doctors.

In order to represent the Black excellence that the Consortium demonstrates, we put its impressive founder, Dr. Stanford, in the center. Photos of day-to-day endeavors such as vaccination campaigns and testing effort show the consortium in action, seen on the right. On the upper left hand corner there is a picture from the opening of the Center for Health Equality. This presents an incredibly significant achievement and solidifies the excellence of these doctors. In the bottom left corner there is a picture of Dr. Stanford leading a meeting of Consortium members.
Mr. Still—I take this opportunity of writing a few lines to you, hoping that this may find you in good health and happiness. I am well at present and doing well at present. I am now in a store and getting sixteen dollars a month at the present. I feel very much obliged to you and your family for your kindness to me while I was with you. I have got along well without much trouble so far. I am now in New York, and I must write to tell you that I am much obliged to you for all your kindness and I hope to see you again at a later date.

I am all well and hope to see you soon.

Yours respectfully,

William Jones.

direct to one hundred 185 dollars.
William Still

William Still was a free Black man who was one of the most important people to the Underground railroad. He was part of the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee and helped free hundreds of people through the Underground Railroad, and created an extensive record of the people that came through it, which led to some families being reunited.

These images are of letters that William Still wrote or received during his life. In the letters lining the top of the collage William Still is requesting information from Samuel May to help him in his court case and describing his experience in his current libel suit. The other pieces of text are letters from people fleeing bondage describing their gratitude to Mr. Still for all he has done for them. The images are also arranged to look like a messy desk. We used the text as a background for William Still’s photograph to present both him and examples of his work. These images were chosen to show how William Still impacted the lives of freedom seekers.

William Still, with the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee greatly aided Black resistance by helping formerly enslaved African Americans reach freedom through Philadelphia. This happened in a number of ways, most notably through a fund to “aid colored persons in distress.” For a time, William Still was the chairman of the Vigilance Society, and was otherwise an activist for Black rights.
The Black Writers Museum

The Black Writers Museum is an organization that was created to provide a venue and forum for the public to explore, celebrate, experience, and study Black literature. Their mission came from questioning the importance that literature had on black history and how preserving these truths is important for the future teachings of history.

Multiple images taken at the People’s Poetry and Jazz Festival were chosen because the event is a partnership between the museum and the community. The collage is made up of photos as well as posters from the event. Also featured in the collage is the founder of the organization, Supreme Dow. These images capture moments of Black joy and excellence of musical and literary talent.

The Black Writers Museum displays excellence as it preserves important documents and literature of Black writers. On their website, they show people performing poetry or dancing and images of the like. This displays Black excellence and joy, through the bringing together of communities, celebrating accomplishments, and preserving of the truths of America’s history. Historically, Black writers have not been publicly displayed and this museum resists this norm by showcasing many of them.