

"The Fight for True Democracy"



A GUIDE TO LISTENING WITH CHILDREN

1619 is a New York Times audio series hosted by journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, who created The 1619 Project initiative for The New York Times Magazine. You can find more information about the podcast along with transcripts for listening at [nytimes.com/1619podcast](https://www.nytimes.com/1619podcast). Episode one explores the many ways in which Black Americans have fought to help the U.S. move toward the ideal of democracy it was founded on. This episode includes some scenes of graphic violence, which we identify in the guide.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE LISTENING

- What is democracy? What are some symbols of democracy that you know of? Are any of these symbols in your home? In your school?
- Some of the history & personal stories told in this podcast are hard to listen to because they describe painful events. What can we do to take care of ourselves when something is both important & difficult to listen to?

INTRO: THE WHITE LION & THE FLAG

0:00-10:34

- What is ironic about the name Point Comfort? Does this irony remind you of any other historical names or landmarks?
- How did Hannah-Jones feel about the American flag her dad flew in their yard as a child? Why?

THOMAS JEFFERSON & THE NATION'S FOUNDING

10:35-20:25

- What is some evidence that Thomas Jefferson & the other founders of the country were aware of the hypocrisy in the Declaration of Independence & the Constitution?
- This section is bookmarked by the reflection of an elderly Black gentleman whose grandfather was enslaved by Jefferson. Why do you think it was important to include his voice?

THE CIVIL WAR & RECONSTRUCTION

20:25-30:22

- What questions do you have about Lincoln after listening to this section?
- The Black abolitionists who chose to stay & fight for the American ideal claimed the U.S. as their home. What defines home for you?
- What initially allowed for some progress in developing rights for Black Americans during Reconstruction? Why was that progress eventually halted?

THE STORY OF ISAAC WOODARD JR.

30:22-34:15

(graphic descriptions of violence)

- How does learning about the violence against Isaac Woodard Jr. & other Black veterans after the World Wars make you feel?
- Have you heard stories similar to Woodard's before? What hypocrisies does this violence against Black Americans who fight for the country reveal?

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT/CLOSING

34:15-41:57

- How have the laws & amendments fought for by Black people helped other groups of Americans?
- What is research? What did doing research about Black history help Nikole understand about her dad & about herself as an American?

AFTER LISTENING ACTIVITY

Research local community organizations fighting to make positive changes to combat voter suppression & civil rights violations.